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THE TRUE MISSION OF THE TEACHER.

A PRIZE ESSAY, BY MRS. RACHEL C. MATHER,
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FROM the humming-bee up to the morning stars that sing together, from the deep base of the roaring wave to the rich alto of the feathered choir, harmonic Nature unites her thousand voices in a perpetual anthem of exultant labor, while toiling man responds in cheerful chorus from many a busy home, field, and studio, from many an eloquent hall, desk, and bar, from bustling mart, noisy shop, and clacking loom, through ringing bell and bellowing engine and rushing car, saying, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

Yet not for themselves alone do these agents toil. Earth and its teeming myriads, beast, bird, and insect, have each a work to do,—a mission to perform. Every vegetable and mineral, every element and atom, have an end to accomplish in Nature's great laboratory; and unwearied Nature herself, while she charms our eye, and symbolizes the spirit-life, assures us that she labors not for herself, but to convert rude chaos into a glorious dwelling-place for man, and from the inanimate mineral kingdom, up through the organic vegetable, to elaborate beautiful forms of animal life. Her mission is to vivify and educate matter, and in its joyous fulfilment she "rests not day and night."

And man, creation's lord, for whom all Nature toils, and

for whose development the universe was organized,—man, the image and transcript of the Deity, with graceful form and lofty mien, comprehensive intellect and high moral endowments, assures us he too has a work to do, a great work, and one that corresponds in sublimity with his high rank in creation's scale ; that his lofty powers were not given him merely to transform matter by delving perpetually in earth, wood, stone, and stubble, but to render him a fellow-worker with God in the education of mind ; that his high aspirations were not implanted, simply to stimulate him in the pursuit of wealth and self-aggrandizement, but to lead him out from the thralldom and materialism of Nature to ascend those intellectual and moral heights, where he may survey the immortal spirit's wide domain, and receive and radiate the life divine.

Every human being has an appropriate place and an appointed sphere of labor. Each individual is sent into the world on a special errand, and must deliver his own message ; and to subserve this end, God endows him with suitable talents, and corresponding tendencies ; and, more eminently to qualify him, Providence wisely orders the circumstances of his life, and directs his education. To know, then, what is the sphere for which Nature has endowed us, and how to fill it ; to know what is the work for which God has prepared us, and how to do it, should be the earnest desire of every heart, and the ruling aim of every life ; for this is our peculiar mission, "the work the Father hath given us to do."

MAN'S TRUE MISSION.

What is the true mission of the teacher ? But first we will inquire, What is the true mission of the human race ? Before the artisan converts rude masses of wood and stone into edifices of symmetry and magnificence, before he rears the walls or lays the foundation, he inquires the design and use of those structures, and then shapes the rough cedar and marble into appropriate forms of strength and beauty. And before the teacher moulds the plastic minds of her pupils, she too should know something of the ultimate purpose of their lives, that she may train them to answer that purpose ; and something of their high destiny, that she may the more successfully lead them on to its full achievement.

Ever since man went forth from Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken, his incessant effort has been to subordinate earth and Nature to the subserving of his temporal interests. Since the days of Tubal-cain, he has been a successful artificer in brass and iron. Nor has he forgotten

to assert his dominion over the beasts of the field ; but ever since Nimrod first subdued the wild denizens of the forest, he has roamed the earth a "mighty hunter." Harnessing the very elements into his service, he levels the forests, and converts the howling wilderness into a blooming Eden, which he covers with waving grain and delicious fruits, traverses with roads, and adorns with cities, themselves embellished with all the enchantments of art. "Triumphing over wind and wave," he exchanges the products of distant climes. Summoning electricity to do his bidding, he annihilates distance, and brings remote nations into close communion. And that he may reduce Nature to a more complete vassalage, he seeks for new truths in science ; he discovers and invents, ever thus developing his physical energies, his intellect and will, and fostering his love of supremacy ; while the noblest powers of his soul lie dormant, and aspirations after the pure, beautiful, and true, are crushed and stifled out of existence. Thus, while faithfully fulfilling his mission in the subordination of the external world, most lamentably has he neglected to subordinate the world within ; consequently, he has grown to be a giant in intellect, while in his moral development he is often a puny, idiotic dwarf.

Yet, in all ages, teachers sent from God, inspired poets, prophets, and philosophers, have taught that man is created for a higher purpose than merely to provide for himself food, raiment, and shelter ; that his true life is not that of the body, but of the soul ; that he is living now, to live again ; that this is only the germinal stage of his existence, upon which he is launched to unfold his spirit for the great future, by a life of love, truth, and self-denying duty. They tell us that God made man in His own image, to embody and radiate the life of God ; and in His own likeness, that man's intellect might be a consecrated medium for the Divine Mind, and his heart a pure channel for the Divine Love ; and that life's great work is so to beautify and adorn the soul, that it shall be a glorious, holy temple, where God will love to dwell and reveal himself. And with the enlightened enthusiasm of Heaven-taught truth, these pioneers of the race have delivered their message, and often sealed it with their blood, while their pure lives, self-abnegation, and heroic martyrdom demonstrate the truth of their mission, and recommend their instructions to our highest regard.

OFFICE OF EDUCATION.

But how shall man attain this higher life ? Weaker than a worm, the frailest of all God's creatures is he, when he comes

upon the stage. His inherent energies are slumbering, and must be aroused ; his affections are dormant, and must be enkindled ; his mind is all imprisoned in the flesh, and must be educated, or *led out*. All the germs of power are wrapped up in his little frail being, but they are all latent, and must be developed in order to assert their power. And a general education, not of the intellect only, but of the whole being,—body, mind and heart,—including business, literature, esthetics, and religion,—is the only process of developing his complicated organism, so as to secure his highest well-being and happiness, and prepare him for the various duties, relations, and trials of this world, and for the wider sphere and higher life of the world to come.

To unfold the germs of thought and feeling, to enlighten the mind, direct the affections, cultivate pure principles, and form good habits ; to develop character in beautiful symmetry, and thus prepare the young to act well their part in the drama of life ; to dignify and ennoble humanity, and elevate it to a plane nearer to God and Heaven, is, therefore, the great work of education, and consequently the true mission of the teacher.

Much of this extensive work is the peculiar office of the parent ; and much must be accomplished by self-culture, the influence of society, and the discipline of Heaven ; yet wide is the teacher's field, and arduous and responsible her many duties.

Education may be divided into three distinct branches, physical, intellectual, and moral, corresponding to the three departments of our being. These should be conducted simultaneously, and ever keep pace with each other ; still, each will admit of a separate consideration.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

Physical education consists in the improvement of the corporeal organs and functions, so as to promote physical vigor, health, and beauty, including such attention to sleep, diet, clothing, exercise, and ventilation, as shall render the person a pleasant and elegant dwelling-place for the soul, and a good medium for its communication with the external world.

This branch of education is the peculiar mission of the parent. Still, every teacher is aware that mental vigor and ability depend very much upon physical comfort and well-being, and that, if she would successfully promote the mental and moral culture of her pupils, she must first establish this culture on the firm basis of sound health. Since imbecility, irritability, and depression are the miserable offspring of dis-

ease, every conscientious teacher will regard the promotion of her pupils' health as no insignificant part of her mission, and consequently will keep her school-room of the right temperature and well ventilated. Nor will she let them contract their chests by folding their arms, or bending over their desks, but require them to sit erect and stand upright, and thus secure a free and healthy respiration. She will see, too, that opportunity for exercise is afforded them, as often as their age and constitution demand, and that the brain is not over-tasked with study.

PHYSICAL TRAINING IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL.

More emphatically is physical training the mission of the primary school teacher, because *little children* are educated chiefly by the external world, through their senses and corporeal energies, and are therefore more dependent for mental improvement on a good physical condition than at subsequent periods of life, when the mind has learned to act more independently of its frail tabernacle.

Could the teachers of primary schools realize how much imbecility is fostered by the close confinement and irksome restraints they are obliged to enforce, would they not protest against so unnatural a system, by asserting their amenability to a higher authority than human law, to Him who has ordained the laws of Nature, and will not suffer them to be violated with impunity, to Him who has made exercise the parent of vigor, and therefore an inherent right? Since the young can develop their energies only by physical exercise, is it not absurd that *she* should be considered the best teacher, who most successfully represses every instinctive tendency in her pupils to move their little aching limbs, as nature demands?

What mother can enter a primary school where scores of little children sit, with arms folded like felons, and silent and still as death, breathing an atmosphere laden with impurities, and debarred all exercise but a few minutes' recess, and not deeply feel that, in the primary school at least, there is a loud call for reform, based upon the laws of life and health? If the patrons of our schools would relinquish the younger half of this class of children to a committee of intelligent, judicious mothers, Nature's own guardians of the young, these matrons would organize them into pleasant infant schools, where athletic sports and various diverting exercises would occupy the time agreeably, with a view both to present enjoyment and

well-being, and also to subsequent health and mental development.

Yet a good physical training, however important, is only the *basis* of a good education. If the corporeal energies alone are educated, human nature develops itself in huge Goliaths and brawny Amazons, mighty, athletic, and passionate, whose prowess is that only of brute force.

[To be continued.]

ON TEACHING AS A PROFESSION.

NO I.

[Of this series of articles, which the author, on account of the deep and increasing interest now felt in the subject, and the especial thought and effort which for years he has devoted to it, has been requested to contribute to our pages, some portions, we are requested to state, were contained in an address delivered before the New Hampshire State Teachers' Association, and printed in the Congregational Journal of that State. The views of the author (this we are *not* requested to state,) were deemed so important, that at the annual meeting of this Association at Great Falls in November last, measures were adopted for giving to these views a practical realization. We commend them to the careful consideration of our readers.]

To instructors in the department of rhetoric, the correcting of a current error in the use of words is a familiar part of daily duty. I refer here to the common inaccuracy in language by which we hear various trades, occupations, transient employments, and temporary pursuits, dignified by the designation of "professions."

The original signification of the term "profession" suggestively recalls the time, when, according to the formal arrangements of European universities, the student who passed from one department of study to another, or from one grade or class to another, "*professed*" himself, in duly written form, ready to stand a public examination on the subject studied in the class or department from which he was desirous of being promoted. A similar arrangement was adopted when the student had completed his college or his professional studies, and he was desirous of obtaining a certificate or "degree," testifying to the competency of his acquirements to entitle him to the rank of bachelor, master, or "doctor," (teacher,) according to the character and stage of attainment which he *professed* to have reached.

On the original plan of university arrangements, law, medicine, and theology — pursuits in which human life, liberty,

and morality, the vital interests of society, are involved, and in conducting which, sound learning and extensive knowledge are justly deemed indispensable — were, so to speak, guarded against the intrusions of ignorance and incompetency, by a rigorous enforcement of the conditions of “profession” and examination, on all candidates for the momentous offices to which in such cases they aspired. The word “profession,” therefore, became an arbitrary designation for those “liberal” pursuits, as they were called, when they were adopted and practised as the ultimate business of the students’ life; and although, in our own day, the wholesome requirements of “profession” and examination are slackened to a mere nominal entity, we still retain the original designation, as applying justly to the three “liberal professions,” so called; and yet, by the sanction of universal custom, we apply the title of “professor” to the regularly installed instructors in collegiate institutions, though to such only.

Viewing the art of teaching in connection with its high value to human well-being, instructors and philanthropists are, at the present day, repeating the inquiries,— Ought not teaching to be raising to the rank of a liberal profession, distinctly recognized as such? Is it not time that an end should come to the custom of having the important vocation of teaching taken up and laid down at the convenience or caprice of persons who enter upon it with no intention of continuing in it, or with, perhaps, the avowed purpose of using it for merely a temporary pecuniary accommodation to the individual? Is it not high time that the noblest of human pursuits should be adopted as an adequate business for life, guarded by a high standard of preliminary requisition, ensured of emoluments corresponding to its true dignity and value, and protected from the intrusions of the incompetent and unskilful, whether candidate or practitioner? Is it not full time that the vocation of teaching should cease to be dependent, as regards the competency of candidates for its offices, on the verdict of men engaged in other occupations? Ought it not to have its own professional faculty, or appropriate body, of whatever name, competent and empowered to grant professional certificates, licenses, or diplomas?

Far be it from any teacher to disparage the generous aid rendered to the business of instruction by the professional men and others who have ever been the efficient friends of education, in the valuable service which they have rendered to the common interests of society, by undertaking the too often thankless task of examining the teacher to whose guid-

ance they were about to entrust the intellectual culture of their neighborhood. But is not the fact notorious, that the preliminary examination of a schoolmaster has, in multitudes of instances, been a task from which the requisite authority has shrunk, under a sense of incompetency, or which has been readily assumed by that officiousness which sometimes combines the narrowest arrogance with the profoundest ignorance?

Of all the inconsistencies of current custom, surely none is greater, in these days of extended science and critical scholarship in our seminaries, than the fact, not altogether rare, of the examination ceremony in which a well-educated youth undergoes "the committee's" searching inquisition touching the *four* asteroids of the solar system, and the blushing candidate for pedagogic honors is too modest to inform his magisterial examiner that, for his "four," science now enumerates upwards of *thirty*, and is daily looking for many more happy additions to its promising family. How often does the ardent and intelligent teacher—who has gone into a district where intellect was dead or asleep, but where he has aroused it to a new life, by the vivifying influence of Colburn's Arithmetic—hear his "committee" pronounce mental arithmetic a pernicious or unprofitable misspending of time! How often does he hear the analytic study of grammar condemned as an unintelligible and useless farrago!—or "stand in silent sadness by" while his juvenile readers are condemned to pause at every comma till they count one, although the rigidly righteous syntactical comma should happen to have taken its place between the two words in the colloquial phrase, "Yes, sir," or "No, sir."

The progress of science, within the last ten—not to say twenty—years, has disqualified for the office of examining teachers all persons, who, on leaving their school or their college, have plunged into the vortex of busy life, and relinquished the habit of diligent and extensive reading. Education, as a science—I speak not of the routine of *instruction*—dates, in modern times, from the era of Pestalozzi and the faithful coadjutors who carried his principles into their methods of teaching, from whom our own Warren Colburn, the regenerator of school instruction in New England, imbibed the spirit of that little volume which has been our subsoil plough through the whole field of education.

W. R.

LANCASTER.

A SUGGESTION FOR TEACHERS.

THE Secretary of the Association has put into our hands a letter from a member now resident in the State of New York, —an earnest friend of education, an able lecturer, and the author of several highly esteemed text-books. We find in it a suggestion for increasing the circulation of our Journal, which we submit to the consideration of our fellow-teachers.

"I perceive that the matter of your 'Teacher' is to come up. I feel desirous of suggesting an idea or two. As the success of any journal is, to a degree at least, dependent on its pecuniary income, and this also on the number of subscribers, an increase of these is essential. Might it not, then, be mutually beneficial for each teacher to take a copy of the 'Teacher' for every fifteen families of his patrons. The 'Teacher' would thus be benefited evidently. So also would the teacher;—for, as the price of the supply depends upon the demand, it is certain that, the more the people perceive the true character and practical value of education, the higher will the teacher's services be appreciated.

"Now one copy to fifteen families would enable the teacher to send the journal to every family in the course of the month; and by drawing the scholars' attention to the articles he esteemed especially useful to parents and the public, he might secure that they would be often read; and much seed must be scattered that a little may take root. Let some article appear in every number adapted to take hold of the public mind.

"The teacher would also secure to himself this *immediate* good. His patrons would see that he felt an interest in their welfare; and in many cases, this feeling would be such that he would not be allowed to defray the expense.

"Besides, the cultivation of the missionary spirit to a reasonable degree does not do any person's *heart* any harm.

"Let, then, an effort be made to make the 'Teacher' a '*tract*' for a two days' sojourn in every family in the 'Old Bay State,' and blessings will be showered in rich abundance upon the workers."

Fellow teachers, is there not force in these arguments? Shall not the plan suggested receive a trial? The very title of our first article, "The True Mission of the Teacher," implies that the teacher should be a *missionary*; that he should labor with a hearty desire to do good, with the spirit of disinterested, self-sacrificing benevolence. If he has no heart so to labor, we cannot conceive of him as at all fitted for his office.

And in urging an effort to benefit your schools, and the communities around you, and your own hearts, through the wider circulation of the "Teacher," we are not acting from any selfish motive. We are not "binding heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and laying them on the shoulders" of

others, while we are not willing ourselves "to move them with one of our fingers." The Association has no desire for pecuniary gain from the "Teacher;" and the labors and responsibilities of its officers, whether Directors, Financial Committee, or Editors, in behalf of its periodical,—labors and responsibilities pressing by no means lightly upon some of us,—are wholly gratuitous. You will, of course, serve the good cause best, by obtaining subscribers, so far as you can, in the families around you, that the "Teacher," upon its beneficent work, may not merely visit these families, but become domesticated among them. But if you will send it as a *visitor* where it cannot find a home, we will share with you in the expense; and low, very low, as our terms now are, we will even reduce them, for this missionary object, one half. To any subscriber who wishes *additional copies for gratuitous circulation*, we will send them at half price, payment being made in advance.

CIRCULARS TO PARENTS.

It is essential to full success in the education of the young, that sympathy should be established between the teacher and the parent; that they should have friendly relations to each other, a mutual understanding, and an efficient coöperation. But how shall these requisites be secured? Most parents seldom, many never, come to the school-room; and considerable time must usually elapse after the commencement of a school term, before the teacher has completed his circuit of calls upon the parents. But those occasions upon which union and communion between the two parties are most needed, more frequently occur at or near the beginning of the term,—during that chaotic or incipient period, before school relations are fully adjusted, school regulations understood, school authority established, and school habits formed;—when as yet the teacher is learning to know his scholars, the scholars are testing the temper and energy of their teacher, and the people are for the most part looking on with a kind of curious unconcern, to see whether the new master or mistress "can *keep* the school."

How shall this difficulty be met? One of the best methods undoubtedly is, for a member of the Superintending Committee, or the Prudential Committee, to call together the parents at the very outset, and introduce them to the teacher, making such remarks himself, and drawing forth such remarks from the teacher and others, as may be appropriate to the occasion. Where the teacher is not thus aided by the Committee, he may

himself, in some cases, with excellent effect, invite such a meeting of his own motion and in his own name. But teachers who are not somewhat accustomed to addressing public assemblies, and especially ladies, are wont to shrink from such publicity and, as some might fancy, forwardness of action. The kind lady with whom the teacher boards sometimes interposes with her good offices, and invites the people to meet the stranger in an informal way at her house. But the neighborhood is often too numerous for this, and sadly often they are not all upon visiting terms. A *party*, for so it would be called, would only stir up new jealousies and feuds.

In the absence of these methods of immediate personal acquaintance, and likewise in connection with them, it is never amiss, and sometimes of essential utility, for the teacher to send to the parents a courteous, kind, and faithful circular, on the first day of the school, or on the first day that their children come to school. Copies of this can be carried to the school-room ready folded, and can be there superscribed, and sent by the children.

We present below a specimen of such a circular, which has come to us from what was so recently the barbarous, and but little before that the savage, West; from the teacher of one of the principal schools in the flourishing city of Cleveland. We must be careful that we do not let these enterprising Yankee cities of the West outdo us in their zeal for education, and in the liberality and perfectness of their school arrangements. Our cities have quite a formidable rival in Cleveland, if we may judge from a Report of its Schools lately received. This Report presents a view of the spacious, fine-looking building in which the particular school from which the circular has come to us is kept. It is honored in having received from the Mayflower its beautiful and illustrious name. We have here an intimation of the Puritan origin of the free school systems of the West, as of the East. Shall we let these transplanted slips of our "Liberty Tree" flourish better than the noble old stock at home?

The circular covers one page of a letter sheet, leaving the rest of the sheet for any written communication that may be desired, either to parents or others. In this case, the third page is addressed to our publisher in the following very welcome language, for which the writer will please to accept our cordial thanks:—

DEAR SIR:—Please find enclosed one dollar for the "Massachusetts Teacher." I find the "Teacher" quite as indispensable here as while I was teaching in Massachusetts.

The first page reads thus :—

CIRCULAR TO PARENTS.

It is our earnest desire to become acquainted with the patrons of our school ; and especially to meet them in the school-room, from which point of view they would have the best opportunity of judging of the instruction and training which are to tell so powerfully upon the character and destiny of those so dear to them. We would, indeed, be glad to visit them in their families, where, freed from the immediate pressure of labor, we should enjoy a better opportunity to converse upon subjects connected with the education of their children. This we intend to do so far as other duties will permit. But these visits can be never so profitable as when parents have prepared themselves to make and receive suggestions by actual observation in the school-room.

Parents, we fear, who seldom or never take this stand-point, think of the duties of the teacher chiefly as having reference to their own one or two children ; and fail to remember that these are only a small fraction of the school ; each member of which must have equal attentions, rights, and privileges.

The teacher stands in the place, to a certain extent, of scores of parents. Each parent acknowledges the difficulty of his position, and feels himself inadequate to his duties. How much more the teacher ; especially if these scores of parents stand aloof, and extend to him little or no sympathy, and withhold from him all knowledge of the individual peculiarities of their children.

No one can feel too deeply the importance of free intercourse between parents and teachers. Out of it naturally spring mutual understanding and mutual sympathy. The teacher can meet the peculiarities of the pupil more intelligently. The parent can intrust his child to the teacher with greater confidence ; at least, fatal misunderstandings would be avoided. And the pupil, conscious of this mutual understanding and confidence, would be saved from the temptation to misrepresentation ; and would be less in danger of going astray in that part of his education where the allurements of vice assail him unprotected by the presence of parent or teacher. Conscious of this, too, his interest in his school duties could not fail to be awakened ; without which it is well nigh in vain that he is sent to school.

An Arabian proverb has it—" You may lead a horse to the water, but you cannot compel him to drink." He must be thirsty. So the mind of the pupil must work of its own choice. The Pierian fountain may open in the school-room ; he may be sent to it, but must thirst, or he will not drink of its sparkling, vital waters. This thirst of the pupil must be created ; and, in a great measure, by home influence. He thinks, attends, goes through with those mental processes necessary to understanding, remembering, and increasing his mental capacity, only as he *wills* ; and wills, only as he is interested ; and is interested very much as his parents are. This interest is often, to a great extent, manifested by the regularity and punctuality of the pupil's attendance. These are, ordinarily, the measures of his interest. Nothing can be more fatal to this interest than absence and tardiness. The parent who permits unnecessary irregularity of attendance, not

only does an injustice to his own child, but to every neighbor's child in school. A distinguished educator and statesman has said in addressing pupils,—“Be punctual. If a scholar is late, the whole school is disturbed; his own progress is interrupted; the order of the day is interfered with; and, what is worst of all, a habit of punctuality is not formed—a habit essential to the success and happiness of life. ‘*A little too late*’ is a fit motto to be inscribed upon the tombstones of half of the unfortunates in the business of this world, and more than half who fail of the happiness of the future.”

Pupils should be dissatisfied with every failure in reciting and complying with the requirements of the school,—should aim high in the performance of every duty. But they will seldom aim above what is approved by their parents. Even *disobedience* will be thought lightly of, if it is encouraged at home. So if attention to any particular branch or requirement is discouraged, all their movements that way will be up hill.

If the parent says communication in school is a small thing, it is natural that the child should think so too, and act accordingly; though his teachers think it to be the greatest source of imperfect lessons, superficial scholarship, and disorder.

Youth, accustomed to estimate things by what is seen and present, are too apt to measure their advancement by the class they are in,—the number of pages gone over,—or the amount of facts lodged in the memory. Parents need to exert their influence, with the teacher's, to correct the erroneous views of childhood; and lead the child to feel that the object of education with reference to the mind is not merely the acquirement of knowledge, but of the power to *think*,—to *know*,—and to use best what he knows; that he is educated intellectually, who can think when, where, and how he pleases; that he is educated morally, whose prevailing will is to think aright; that, as a whole, it is “a sound mind in a sound body;” and that its results are individual men and women with mental, moral, and physical powers harmoniously developed.

Thus having in mind the proper object of his efforts, the pupil will be freed from unhealthy impatience, and learn the great lesson—“to labor and to wait;” which is necessary to his persevering and successful advancement in the right direction.

Matters external to the school-room are the occasion of great perplexity to teachers. What the pupils are as individuals, the school will be as a whole. And what they are out of school—at home and elsewhere—that they will be in school. If they deceive, or swear, or are vulgar, or coarse, or slovenly, or use tobacco, otherwheres, they are likely to at school. But a school composed of hundreds of young deceivers, swearers, idlers, slovens, quarrellers, and smokers and chewers of tobacco, were a thing too dreadful to contemplate. No parent or guardian would permit the child of his care to become a member of such a school. He would shrink from the thought. But the school will be so in so far as individual pupils are. And it must be confessed that all our pupils are not free from these bad habits; all are tempted to indulge in them; and some do so to an extent that

should arouse every friend of good order and virtue—every friend of the rising generation. But how shall our pupils be freed and effectually preserved from them, save by the united and vigilant efforts of those who exercise an influence over them?

~~~~~ } *Teachers.*  
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How strange that it should be necessary for teachers to be sending such circulars to parents! We should rather have expected that parents would be sending letters, requesting teachers to coöperate with them in their great work of educating their children, and urging them to increased fidelity in those labors upon the success of which the dearest hopes of parents so vitally depend. How impossible it would seem, if we had not evidence in the daily fact, that those whose real interest in a work is the greatest, should often be alive to it the least; and should need to be aroused by others to save that which they hold dearest from ruin! So the man who is just upon the point of perishing with the cold, feels himself in a delicious state of languid repose; and is often offended with the companion who insists on disturbing his quiet that he may save his life.

SCHOOL-HOUSES SET IN VERSE.

MESSRS. EDITORS:— I am induced to write to you by the approaching season of the year. For does not March follow February? And is not March, rude, wild, and stormy though he be, that one of the Brotherhood of Months, upon whose acts, more than upon those of any other, our school interests depend? Does not he, for the most part, summon with his wind instruments farmers and villagers to their annual town and district meetings? And through their votes does he not determine whether schools shall be supported liberally or parsimoniously; whether competent or incompetent, zealous or indifferent men, shall be chosen to take charge of them; whether old school-houses shall be left standing in all their discomfort and disgrace,—the torture of the young, the trial of the teacher, the eyesore of the traveller, and the reproach of the neighborhood,—the plaything of his winds, more penetrating year by year, till at last by a furious gust he prostrates it to the ground,—or shall be removed, to give place to a structure more comely to the eye, more pleasing to the taste, more honorable to the district, more inviting to visitors, more encouraging to the teacher, more

comfortable and healthful to the pupils, more salutary and elevating in all its influences?

Since this month has such potency for good or ill, every friend of the right and good, every patriot and lover of the young, should not fail to heed the precept:—

“Remember March, the ides of March remember.”

It has occurred to me that some who would not read a prose argument, might listen to verse; that the sweetly echoing rhymes might, perhaps, steal into the ear, and gently deposit their lesson in some recess of the mind, where by degrees they might change the general tone of sentiment and feeling, and prepare for efficient and right action. If your views agree upon this point with mine, will you do me the favor of inserting the following poetic contrasts? The first is from a poem delivered by Mr. J. K. Lombard, Principal of Hinsdale Academy, at a “Gathering of the Alumni of the Springfield High School.” The second, as appears from an earnest apostrophe which it contains, was written as an appeal to Connecticut. But Massachusetts, I am sorry to say, has also districts and towns to which such an appeal would by no means be inappropriate. I am indebted for it to the Connecticut Common School Journal, from which I know you will extract with the greater pleasure, because its Resident Editor, the able and efficient Superintendent of Schools in that State, was one of the founders of your Journal, and for several years one of its most active editors. We may also prefer a species of claim to it, for the other poem, which is of Massachusetts origin, has in part been copied into the same periodical; so that in the insertion which I request, we seem to be only reclaiming our own *with proper interest*, if that may be called *proper* which is certainly more than the legal rate of six per cent. I offer these selections especially as a plea for appropriate school-houses, while they also present some pictures of the kind of teacher, discipline, and school-life, naturally associated with the building.

AN EYE-WITNESS.

THE TWO PICTURES.

BY J. K. LOMBARD.

A small red building on a high, steep hill,
For unknown years has stood, and lingers still,—
The school-house dubbed; though small, no mean affair;
Perhaps some statesman learned his letters there.
The portal waits no ceremonial knock,
But open wide, ignores both latch and lock,

Proclaiming thus the once forbidden tree
 Of knowledge, now to every passer free.
 An inner door protects the busy fold
 From driving snows and winter's searching cold.
 In front, the desk, with weapons of misrule
 Which make books burdens, and the mind a mule ;
 Arrayed around, the stiff old oaken forms,
 More scarred by knives than ever tree by storms ;
 The windows loose, and, like some grim redoubt,
 With dark suspicious objects peering out.
 A long black box, with chinks and cracks replete,
 Assumes the office of creating heat ;
 And while the generous stores of hemlock last,
 It vies in fury with the northern blast ;
 Its steaming sides with fiery ardor glow,
 Like Vulcan forging thunderbolts below.
 Such is the realm, our modern shops unlike,
 Where *overseers* are often on the strike ;
High school, if, Frenchman-like, you mean by "high,"
 What is removed alike from plain and sky.

When winter's sceptre "rules the inverted year,"
 Our school is ruled by pedagogue severe ;
 On evil deeds he like a whirlwind falls,
 And evil-doers by his frown appals.
 Supreme he sits upon his lofty seat,
 Supreme alike in power and self-conceit,
 A petty tyrant,—Nero in disguise,
 Whose subjects hate and fear him, or despise.

How long shall quacks in every art and trade
 Thus dupe their patrons, and the laws evade ?
 The ranting preacher who can scarcely read,
 Can utter dogmas and invent a creed ;
 A second ape, with hardly less of skill,
 Can mix a draught, and make a dose to "kill ;"
 But more than either, any brainless fool
 With strength of arm can keep a village school.
 Some few dull winters such a guide as he,
 Perforce has led him through the Rule of Three ;
 The harvest in and press of business o'er,
 Some other source must swell his scanty store.
 Behold him, then, invested with command,
 And harrowing youngsters like unbroken land ;
 If small his knowledge of the English pound,
 With twenty dollars good per month, and "found."
 Well may the youth who drinks at such a spring,
 Rebel at learning as a "dangerous thing,"
 Escape from school as often as he can,
 And long for time to make the boy a man.

* * * * *

Such are the lines our untried hand displays,
 Such are the memories of departed days ;
 Time heralds change, contemptuous of the past,
 And old abuses die of age at last.

Another light reveals an altered view ;
 So but a step divides the false and true.
 A handsome structure on a quiet street,
 Of easy access, yet a calm retreat ;
 In front, a grass-plot, fenced and neatly kept,
 With flowers hedge-bordered, and with walks well swept.
 A bubbling fountain in its music seems
 Forever dripping dim, delicious dreams.
 Within, are many proofs of taste refined,
 Of care for comfort in the march of mind.
 A place for all things, motto old but good,
 By practice proves its value understood.
 Of maps and charts behold a long array ;
 Well chosen maxims all the walls display ;
 The floor smooth polished ; and, arrayed in pairs
 At cherry desks, are cheerful easy chairs.
 The noiseless pointer on its circuit fast
 Counts off the minutes, all too quickly past.
 And Music, too, employs her soothing art
 To form the taste and purify the heart.
 The cheerful group their daily tasks pursue,
 And seize with pleasure each discovery new ;
 Their toil directed by no overseer,
 Like bond-slaves driven by the lash or fear,
 But kindly led, by guides of practised eye,
 Where deeper mines and richer treasures lie.

THE CONTRAST.

In a school-room, small and low,
 This is the way the minutes go—
 If you farther wish to know,
 Call, and *facts* will plainly show :
 Eyelids drooping,
 Figures stooping ;
 Classes listless,
 Scholars restless ;
 Teacher weary,
 School-room dreary,
 Looking sadly,
 Lessons badly ;
 Many sighing,
 Some are crying ;
 Others idling,
 Sitting sideling,

Left their seat
 To pinch or beat ;
 Study loudly,
 Answer proudly ;
 Circumvention
 Claims attention ;
 Air is horrid,
 Faces florid ;
 Learning never,
 Sickness ever.
 Brooding over such a place,
 O Connecticut, my State !
 Rouse thee from thy downward fate,
 Wipe away thy dark disgrace.

THE PICTURE REVERSED.

To a school-room large and airy,
 Hastens many a little fairy ;
 Flowers are blooming all around,
 Wide and smooth the green play-ground,
 Boughs are waving in the breeze,
 Birds are singing in the trees,
 Sunlight streaming gayly over
 Fields of waving grain and clover ;
 Some are shouting, some are singing,
 Till the clear-toned school-bell ringing,
 Calls them from their happy play
 To the labors of the day.

Sunny locks and rosy faces,
 Wearing childhood's thousand graces,
 Bow in solemn stillness there
 While they lisp their morning prayer ;
 And each sparkling eye is hid
 By its fringed and drooping lid.
 Softly falls, with holy seeming,
 Love, from realms of glory streaming,
 While each spirit-eye is open
 To behold some heavenly token
 Of a blessing on the hours
 They shall spend in Learning's bowers.

Happy seems each little creature,
 Happy, too, their smiling teacher,
 While, 'mid truth, and bloom, and song,
 Glide the rapid hours along.
 Those young hearts are learning well
 Virtue's most enchanting spell ;
 Souls to holier life are bounding

By the influences surrounding ;
 Spirits plume their new-fledged pinions
 For a holier home's dominions,
 And in Wisdom's *pleasant* ways,
 Fleets the morning of their days.

PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEES.

"As is the Teacher, so is the school," is an old adage of such obvious truth in its general application, that it has passed into an educational axiom. It follows, by direct inference, that he who has the power of determining *who* shall be the teacher, has, in general, the power of determining *what* shall be the school. The welfare of our schools, then, is primarily dependent upon those who select the teacher. But these are themselves selected by the community. It is manifest, therefore, that in their selection and appointment the greatest care should be exercised, since an error here will be such a fountain of wide-flowing evil.

But who are the officers that select our teachers? In the great majority of our towns, they are the Prudential Committees. They select just such teachers as they please, without check or responsibility; they bring the persons selected to the School Committees for examination; and if these find no such glaring defects as to compel them to withhold the usual certificate,—and in most cases the defects must be very glaring for this,—these persons are put into the schools. The examinations have, in general, an excellent influence; and cases occur in which candidates are rejected. But these cases are comparatively so few,—the rare exceptions to a general rule; School Committees are so much inclined to lean to the side of mercy; and they so often take into consideration, even when quite dissatisfied with the candidate, the disappointment, irritation, ill-will, loss of office, injury in business, and other disagreeable consequences, that are in danger of following a rejection; that we can have no hesitation in stating, as the great practical law, that the selection of the Prudential Committee determines who shall be the teacher. At the same time, by a singular anomaly, the School Committee take all the responsibility in regard to the qualifications of this teacher, and must visit and take charge of the school. If difficulty arises, the burden of removing it falls upon them, and not at all upon the Prudential Committee. Indeed, no obligation is imposed upon the latter even to go near the school; and many who hold this office never

visit the school during the whole term, unless there be some formal examination or exhibition at the close, and some not even then.

Where an office has so much power, and so little responsibility, it is certainly incumbent upon towns and districts, if they have any regard for their schools, to take every security for its faithful and wise administration, which the law allows. What, then, can they do for this end?

1. They can choose *three persons* for the Prudential Committee of a district, instead of one only, as is still the custom, and as the law required before the wise statute of April 9th, 1839. It is deeply to be regretted that districts have not oftener availed themselves of this provision of the law. For some of the most glaring evils in our present school administration arise from the fact, that the Prudential Committee, with its vast and irresponsible power, consists of but a single individual, having no one with whom he must consult, acting according to his own mere pleasure, and not bound to render any account for his action,—in short, a perfect school autocrat for his term of office, as absolute as the Czar of Russia or the Emperor of China.

This despotic power, so little akin to the principles of our government, is the more dangerous from the lack of experience to guide it. For the common mode of appointment *by rotation*, brings into the office, each year, either a new man, or one who has not held it recently. Hence, he is often really at a loss to know where to look for a good teacher, or what measures to adopt to find one. In his embarrassment, he is in danger of accepting the first plausible candidate who offers himself for the winter school. For the summer school, a teacher is apt to be found for him in his own family connection. There is a daughter, or niece, or cousin, or sister, or wife's sister, who "has been so many terms to the Academy," and "is as good a scholar as Jane Such-a-one, who taught last year," and who "has depended upon the place when he should be the Committee," and "will never forgive him if he passes her by." And, besides, "the Committees before him took care of their friends, and why should not he of his? It would be no more than right, that some of the public money should come into his family, as it had gone into others." And then this money, it is urged, is so much wanted for a new dress, or a gold watch, or for music lessons, or another term at an academy or boarding school. It is no wonder if, thus hardly pressed, with the affection which he has for his relative, and the good opinion which he would naturally have of her talents and attainments,

he yields at discretion ; and both gratifies his own feelings, and escapes a shower of tears and reproaches, by carrying the family candidate to the School Committee for examination, excusing himself thus from responsibility :—" If she is not qualified, the Committee will not give her a certificate ; and if she is qualified, and the Committee pronounce her so, there is surely no reason why she should not have her turn in teaching, as her acquaintances have had theirs."

The appointment of three persons instead of one, for the Prudential Committee, would chiefly remove this system of family patronage, this nepotism, as it would be called in State affairs. For even if they acted mainly through their Chairman, still they must consult together in respect to the choice of teachers. Any disposition of one to undue favoritism or hasty appointment would have a check in the other two ; and feelings of delicacy would forbid one's proposing an appointment from his own family, unless his associates deemed it for the public good. Besides, in a Committee of three, the chances of obtaining an experienced, faithful, and efficient officer would be trebled.

Nor would the advantages of this greater number be confined to the selection of teachers, but would extend to all the important duties devolving upon the Committee. For example, three would have more influence than one in securing the acquiescence of the district in any needful repairs or furnishing of the school-house, and would be likely to carry these into effect with more judgment, efficiency, and absence of self-interest. They would also be better able to sustain a good teacher in any case of difficulty, and to direct aright the general sentiment of the neighborhood. " If one prevail against him, two shall withstand him ; and a threefold cord is not easily broken."

2. The law makes provision that the town, instead of choosing the Prudential Committees at its annual meeting, may refer the choice of them to the several districts. The latter method, which is, indeed, the more usual one, is certainly in better accordance with the principles of our government. As the Committees represent and act for the districts, these principles manifestly require that they should be chosen by the districts.

3. And being chosen by the districts, they ought, from the great importance of the office, to be elected at *full* district meetings. One of the worst features in our school administration is the neglect of these primary meetings, expressing, as it must, an extensive feeling in the community, that it is of no great consequence who takes care of the district school,

and, of course, how the district school is taken care of; that it is of no great consequence who selects the teacher, and, of course, what kind of teacher is selected. We can never have an efficient district-school system, except as we have district meetings, which shall be less a misnomer, less an *emptiness and desolation*, than many which are now held.

4. What a marvel it seems to be, of thoughtlessness or indifference, that the appointment to so important an office should be made, as in very many of our districts, chiefly upon the principle of *rotation*, — the wheel, as it turns from year to year, sometimes bringing up the name of the best man in the district, and sometimes, perhaps, of the very worst. A reason for this rotation in some districts is, that they most unwisely make the office so burdensome, that men are unwilling to take it, except in their turn, as a species of tax to the district. Other and very serious evils also result. If the Prudential Committee is expected to keep the school-house in repair and furnished without a tax upon the district, it is not wonderful if his ideas of proper repair and furniture should be sadly inadequate; if he should be content with making the house tenantable for his year at as little expense as possible, and handing it over to his successor in *not much worse* repair than he himself received it. If, according to the usages of the *boarding-round* system, he is expected to furnish gratuitously a home for the teachers whom he employs, from Saturday to Monday, and a room through the week where they can keep their trunks and change their clothes, it is not wonderful if he should deem himself excusable in employing those who would be personally agreeable to his family.

Let all undue burdens be removed from the office, and then let the very best men in the district be elected to it, and for the benefit of their experience, retained in it, if they will consent, year after year. Especially let not the whole board be changed at any one election.

5. If the citizens of the district are really in earnest about their schools, we should suppose that they would not let the district meeting pass without expressing this earnestness, without consulting together upon their educational interests and concerting measures for their promotion, without the passage of votes and resolutions for the direction of their school affairs through the year, which, if not legally binding upon either School or Prudential Committee, would usually be respected by both in their official action.

It would change materially our educational aspects, and add greatly to the efficiency of our noble school system, if our

Prudential Committees should always consist of *three* men instead of *one*; if they should be chosen at *full district meetings*; if they should be selected as the very *best* men in the district; and if they should receive for their aid and guidance some fuller and more decided *expression*, than is now usual, of the views and feelings of those for whom they act, in regard to the great interest confided to their care. We appeal to our readers whether they will not earnestly exert all their influence, to secure, if possible, these improvements for the coming school year.

THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING.

QUESTIONS of great moment will come before us at that meeting. Shall we not consider them betimes, and be prepared to give vote and voice for their right decision?

1. How much MONEY shall we raise for schools? Did we raise enough the last year to employ in all our schools teachers of the best qualifications, for a sufficient length of time? If our appropriation fell short of this mark, shall we not increase it? Could our money be invested with an assurance of better interest?

2. Whom shall we choose for a SCHOOL COMMITTEE? Shall we allow any spirit of party or sect to prevent us from selecting the very best men to superintend the education of our children? Can any man have too much intellect, attainment, activity, fidelity, benevolence, and good judgment for so noble an office?

3. Shall we not take measures for the establishment of a HIGH SCHOOL, even though the law may not require it from us? Shall we limit the privileges which we bestow upon our children to mere legal requisition? Would it not be a saving of money to establish a good High School for the more advanced education of our sons and daughters at home, instead of sending them away from home to academies and boarding-schools? Would they not thus be trained under better influences, and with fewer dangers? Would not the High School exert a quickening power over the other schools; and, with its higher studies, its library, and its apparatus, tend to the general intellectual elevation of the community?

4. If new SCHOOL-HOUSES are to be built, shall they not be models of school architecture, even though the cost be somewhat greater? Are we so poor that we must make stinted appropriations for such an object?

5. If any special questions are to arise in regard to the SCHOOL SYSTEMS of our particular towns, shall we not examine these questions carefully and candidly, and then act upon them with simple reference to the good of our children and the general welfare of the community?

MORAL LESSONS.

No means of moral influence can be found more effectual on young minds, than a judiciously selected biographical anecdote. The ready sympathies of the youthful heart respond, at once, to a mode of instruction so natural and pleasing; while direct and formal inculcation will often fail of its intended effect. The will, in early years, does not readily yield to dry and abstract considerations of a reflective character.

Would it not be a most salutary exercise, in all schools, to have the recounting of some good example of conduct or character, occupy the ten minutes immediately following the opening devotional exercises of the day? Whether offered by the teacher, however, or by one of the pupils, in turn, the anecdote should be *told*—not *read*, if it is meant to live in heart and mind.

A complete course of moral instruction may be given, in this way, during a school term, if the teacher will only take the trouble of preparing a list of the principal home and school virtues of early years, and select appropriate anecdotes for each; or, what is better still, encourage his pupils to furnish such materials from their own reading or observation. The moral lesson becomes, in such circumstances, the favorite lesson of the day.

As we are pleading against too abstract a method of presenting truth, we add a few illustrations from the very many that might be given.

GOOD FOR EVIL.

An old man, of the name of Guyot, lived and died in the town of Marseilles in France. He amassed a large fortune by the most laborious industry, and the severest habits of abstinence and privation. His neighbors considered him a miser, and thought that he was hoarding up money from mean and avaricious motives. The populace pursued him, wherever he appeared, with hootings and execrations; and the boys sometimes threw stones at him. In his will were found the following words:—"Having observed, from my infancy, that the poor of Marseilles are ill-supplied with water, which can only be purchased at a great price, I have cheerfully labored, the whole of my life, to procure for them this great blessing; and I direct that

the whole of my property shall be laid out in building an aqueduct for their use."

"THAT IS A BOY I CAN TRUST."

"I once visited," says a gentleman, "a large public school. At recess, a little fellow came up, and spoke to the master; and as he turned to go down the platform, the master said, 'That is a boy I can trust. He never failed me.' I followed him with my eye, and looked at him when he took his seat after recess. He had a fine, open, manly face. I thought a good deal about the master's remark. What a character had that little boy earned! He had already got what would be worth to him more than a fortune. It would be a passport to the best office in the city, and, what is better, to the confidence of the whole community. I wonder if the boys know how soon they are rated by elder people. Every boy in the neighborhood is known, opinions are formed of him, and he has a character either favorable or unfavorable. A boy of whom the master can say, 'I can trust him; he never failed me;' will never want employment. The fidelity, promptness, and industry, which he has shown at school, are prized everywhere. 'He who is faithful in little, will be faithful in much.'"

ANECDOTE TOLD BY A NEW ENGLAND CLERGYMAN AT A TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.

Soon after I was settled in the ministry, I was appointed a member of the School Committee of the place. In my frequent visits to one of the schools, I took notice of a boy whose clothing was very coarse, and showed many patches, but still was clean and neat throughout. His habits were remarkably quiet and orderly, and his manners very correct. His disposition was evidently generous and kind, and his temper mild and cheerful, as he mingled with his school-mates at play, or joined their company on the road. When I last saw him in New England, he was on his way to school. His appearance still bespoke the condition of his poor and widowed mother; and his hat was but a poor protection against either sun or rain. But, as I passed him, he lifted it with an easy but respectful action, a pleasant smile, and a cheerful "good morning," which, unconsciously to himself, made the noble boy a perfect model of genuine good manners. His bow, his smile, and his words, all came straight from his true, kind heart.

When I last saw him, thirty years had passed, and I was on a visit to the West. The boy had become a distinguished lawyer and statesman. But his bow, and his smile, and his kind greeting, were just the same as those of the barefoot boy with the poor hat.

HOW TO BE LOVED.

One evening, a gentleman related, in the presence of his little girl, an anecdote of a still younger daughter of Dr. Doddridge, which pleased her exceedingly. When the doctor asked his daughter, then about six years old, what made everybody love her, she replied, "I don't know indeed, papa, unless it is because I love everybody." This reply struck Susan forcibly. "If that is all that is necessary

to be loved," thought she, "I will soon make everybody love me." Her father then mentioned a remark of the Rev. John Newton, that he considered the world to be divided into two great masses, one of happiness and the other of misery; and it was his daily business to take as much as possible from the heap of misery, and add all he could to that of happiness. "Now," said Susan, "I will begin tomorrow to make everybody happy. Instead of thinking all the time of myself, I will ask every minute what I can do for somebody else. Papa has often told me that this is the best way to be happy myself, and I am determined to try."

REVIEWERS' TABLE.

READING.

A FIRST CLASS READER; consisting of Extracts in Prose and Verse, with Biographical and Critical Notices of the Authors, for the Use of Advanced Classes in Public and Private Schools. By G. S. Hillard. Boston: Hickling, Swan, & Brown. 1856. 12mo, pp. 504.

THE AMERICAN COMPREHENSIVE READER, for the Use of Schools; containing Exercises in Enunciation, and numerous Selections in Poetry and Prose. By William D. Swan, late Principal of the Mayhew School, Boston. Boston: Hickling, Swan, & Brown. 1855. 12mo, pp. 312.

THE STANDARD SECOND READER; containing Introductory Exercises in Articulation, an Explanatory Index, Reading Lessons, &c. By Epes Sargent, Author of the Standard Speaker, &c. With illustrations by Billings and others. Boston: Phillips, Sampson, & Co. 1855. 18mo, pp. 216.

THE STANDARD FIRST READER, for Beginners; containing the Alphabet, and Primary Lessons in Pronouncing, Spelling, and Reading. By Epes Sargent, &c. 1856. 18mo, pp. 120.

WE are happy to welcome these books to an honorable place upon our table; and to be assured by them that "Boston Reading Books" are not in danger of losing their reputation. We rejoice to greet in the field of school literature, one who has gained so many laurels in other fields as Mr. Hillard; and to see his extensive stores of literary acquisition and his exquisite taste made available for the instruction of the young. We cannot doubt that his beautiful book will be alike successful and useful. The Biographical and Critical Notices constitute a very valuable feature of the work. And we are glad to see that "most of the extracts have never before appeared in compilations of this kind," and will hence be an infusion of fresh literary nutriment into the juvenile, and thus into the popular, mind. In reading books, unlike other school books, a change is sometimes desirable simply for the sake of change; and it may be wise to leave for a time an excellent compilation, which has become very familiar, for another, which in itself is no better, but which will communicate a new impulse and an additional stock of ideas, with fresh forms of expression, to the pupil's mind.

Mr. Swan, though so far from being an old man, is truly a veteran in the work of preparing school books, and has had such signal success in his past efforts, that he may well say:—"The compiler, grate-

ful to his fellow laborers in the cause of education, for the liberal patronage which has been bestowed upon his former labors, respectfully commends this new work to their attention." It appears to have, with new materials, the excellent qualities which have given his other reading books their wide circulation.

The three higher Readers of Mr. Sargent's series have already been most favorably noticed in the "Teacher." It is perhaps praise enough to say, that the two whose names we have given above, are fully worthy to succeed the others—to succeed them in the order of publication, and to precede them in school use. No one can fail of being impressed, even upon a hasty examination, with their happy adaptation to the youthful mind. And one who remembers those wood-cuts in Webster's old Spelling Book, of the boy in the apple tree, and the milk maid tossing the milk from off her head, and the fox in the marsh, and the men conversing about the gored ox, cannot but be delighted with the contrast which the life-like, spirited, and beautiful illustrations in these books present. The First Reader, especially, is well worth buying as a holiday present for a young child, simply for its pictures—that natural alphabet, which so rivets the child's eye, and reaches, without study or spelling, his mind and heart. We thank Mr. Sargent sincerely for his introductory remarks upon principles and methods in teaching, and not the least for the conclusion of the preface to his First Reader, showing, like the other parts of his books, that he has not lost sight of the moral in providing for the intellectual:—

"The moral qualities which the instructors of children ought to possess, are well set forth by Coleridge, in the following lines:—

'O'er wayward childhood wouldst thou hold firm rule,
And sun thee in the light of happy faces,
Love, Hope, and Patience, these must be thy graces,
And in thine own heart let these first keep school.'"

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY.

THE PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE SEA; by M. F. Maury, LL. D., Lieut. U. S. Navy. New York: Harper & Brothers. 8vo, pp. 287.

This is the most valuable book which has been contributed during the past year to that portion of our reading public which is pleased with treatises on applied science. It is crowded with discoveries which are new; and they are all of the highest interest. We call the attention of teachers especially to it, for it is one of those books which are most valuable auxiliaries to the instructor. We cannot take the space which a full review of the work would demand; we merely propose, at the present time, to gratify our readers with a brief account of the views which it presents regarding the cause of the Gulf Stream.

Lieut. Maury, after giving a summary of the theories which have been held as accounting for this surprising phenomenon, shows that the explanation generally offered is untenable,—viz., that it is the outflowing from the Gulf of Mexico of the waters which have been

accumulated there by the influence of the southeast trade wind piling up the waters in the Caribbean Sea. He shows that, though these trade winds may materially *assist* in producing this result, yet that they are entirely inadequate to the task of accumulating waters sufficient to propel the Gulf Stream with the force and velocity with which it runs, taking prominently into account the tendency of all waters to run toward the equator, and the resistance that it meets in the waters of the North Atlantic, and in the elevation of the land from the Florida Pass to Cape Hatteras.

As a few drops of water placed on the surface of a school globe, would have a tendency to fly towards the equator, should the globe be made rapidly to revolve so we have reason to believe that the waters of every open sea have a tendency to flow towards the real equator. And it is a fact, that currents setting in the direction of the equator have been discovered. These, running north or south as the case may be, pass from regions where the objects on the earth's surface do not traverse so great a space in twenty-four hours as objects near the equatorial line, where the parallels are of greater length; and thus entering upon regions where the velocity is greater, the earth flies away from under them, and gives them an apparent motion westward.* As these currents approach the equator, the specific gravity of their surface waters becomes lessened, and these flow away to colder waters where the specific gravity is less, and restore a double equilibrium, first of specific gravities, and then of waters whose tendency is from the poles.

Another cause that is drawing these waters from the poles is the intensity of the evaporation which is taking place on the equatorial belt and in the trade-wind regions, lifting yearly to the clouds a stratum of water averaging sixteen feet in thickness, nearly all of which descends in regions north and south of the tropics. The amount raised annually from the torrid zone by evaporation, is 218,181 cubic miles of water, and vast quantities must set from the polar and temperate regions to supply this immense demand. It is the function of the Gulf Stream to convey back these waters after they have become more briny by evaporation, and we see here the reason for the superior saltiness of its waters to other waters of the ocean.

We have personally little doubt that the discoveries of the next twenty-five years will disclose the fact that electricity and magnetism bear an important part in promoting the great ocean currents, and indeed Maury suggests that these agents are greatly influential in directing the trade winds, and the prevailing westerly winds in the temperate climates.

Lieut. Maury has established the fact that the Gulf Stream of the Atlantic is analogous to the great Pacific current, which is now little known, but which in a few years will have been carefully studied. The eastern coast of Asia will be found to have an influence on that current which our eastern shore has not on the Gulf Stream; but in other respects there is certainly a great similarity between them.

* The reader will remark that the course of these currents from north and south is precisely analogous to that of the trade winds. See Zornlins' Physical Geography, p. 80.

An interesting portion of the two chapters on this subject is that which disproves what has commonly been assumed to be a fact, that the Gulf Stream is deflected from its course by the islands south of Massachusetts, by Newfoundland, and other such obstacles, and proves that such currents have an eastward tendency when flowing from the equator, just as they have a westward tendency when flowing towards it;—that is, because they are now running from a place where they are whirled around the earth's centre at the velocity of a thousand miles an hour, to other places where the earth's surface is not in such rapid motion, and where, retaining their initial velocity, they are carried eastward faster than the earth itself, gaining continually upon the earth's motion from west to east the farther northward they run. And it is easy to see that, unless other obstacles interfere, their course will follow a great circle of the earth. We invite our readers to look at their maps, and see if the Gulf Stream does not do so.

But we must leave the subject here. We may resume it at some future time, or call attention to other matters discussed in the work, but we would earnestly advise all our readers with a taste for these things to read the more complete chapters of Lieut. Maury himself.

W. L. G.

MUSIC.

THE COLUMBIAN SONG BOOK, in Two Parts; containing a choice Collection of Songs, Duets, Glees, Rounds, and Devotional Music, for the School-Room. By Asa Fitz, Author of the Common School Song Book, American School Song Book, Songs for the Million, School Songster, &c. Boston: Hickling, Swan, & Brown. 1856. pp. 192.

THE SACRED MINSTREL; a Selection of Songs and Hymns for Sabbath Schools. By Asa Fitz. Boston: Hickling, Swan, & Brown. 1856. pp. 96.

The list which appears above of the musical works of Mr. Fitz, even without the "&c." appended, shows how earnestly he has labored in the cause of school and popular music. Nor have his efforts been confined to the pen. He has performed a great amount of excellent service by visiting schools, and leading them with his voice into the flowery paths of song.

We invite the attention of better connoisseurs than ourselves (though we claim to be amateurs) to these new works of Mr. Fitz. The Columbian Song Book contains, in the first part, a selection of Hymns, from which we are assured that every thing of a sectarian character is excluded, for the devotional exercises in school. "The hymns are set to old and popular tunes,—familiar melodies, which have been sung by our fathers, and will be sung by the children for generations to come." Every enlightened friend of education must join with all his heart in the wish which the author expresses as his motive for this part of his work, "that in all our school-rooms, both morning and evening, a hymn of praise to the great Creator should be sung by all the children." The second part consists of school songs of a more varied and secular character, many of which are either "new," or "have never before appeared in this country."

The first part is also published separately under the name of the "Sacred Minstrel."

A good song is often one of the very best of sermons. Here are stanzas, adapted to a familiar melody which the teacher should strive to have indelibly engraven on the memory and hearts of his pupils:—

"Go, vile deceit!
 You never shall live with me.
 Go, vile deceit!
 You and I shall never agree.
 For I will faithful pray to be,
 In all I do or say;
 And always speak the honest truth,
 Whether at work or play."
 "Bad temper, go!
 You never shall stay with me.
 Bad temper, go!
 You and I shall never agree.
 For I will always kind, and mild,
 And gentle, pray to be;
 And do to others as I wish
 That they should do to me."—p. 13.

Here is a good lesson for parents:—

"Oh dear! what can the matter be?
 Dear! dear! what can the matter be?
 Parents don't visit the school.
 They visit the circus, they visit their neighbors,
 They visit their flocks, and the servant who labors,
 They visit the soldiers with murderous sabres;
 Now why don't they visit the school?
 "They care for their horses, they care for their dollars,
 They care for their dresses, and fancy fine collars;
 But little, we think, do they care for their scholars,
 Because they don't visit the school."—p. 56.

Against the following we must protest. It might be needed in some states of society, but certainly cannot in ours; and will only strengthen a tendency that is already excessive.

"How merrily looketh the man that hath gold!
 He seemeth but twenty, though threescore years old.
 How merry the bee that flyeth about,
 And gathereth honey within and without!
 But men without money, and bees without honey,
 Are nothing better than drones, drones."—p. 11.

As we see this among so many beautiful and elevating songs, we feel that it has stolen into too good company.

EDUCATIONAL JOURNALS.

We hoped to be able in this number to commend to the attention and the subscriptions of our readers, several of our brother or sister periodicals (the old poets had nothing of the kind, and therefore did not decide for us whether journals are of the masculine or feminine gender; when devoted to education, they certainly ought never to

be neuter, as *things without life*) ; but we are obliged to forego, for the present month, most of the pleasure which we had anticipated in doing this, and to confine ourselves to the new work of ampler size and more extended aim, to which we are most happy to extend the hand of cordial greeting. The first number of the "AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EDUCATION AND COLLEGE REVIEW" appeared in August last, and was entirely appropriated to the transactions of the the fourth annual session of that important national society, the American Association for the Advancement of Education, held at Washington, in December, 1854. The second number, that for January, 1856, has recently appeared, and is rich in valuable matter. The greater part consists of addresses and papers read before the same Association at its annual meeting in New York, last August. We have from this source the admirable lecture of Prof. Huntington of Cambridge, on "Unconscious Tuition," with which some of our own Associations have been favored ; and interesting and instructive papers, by Prof. Olmstead of New Haven, on the "Democratic Tendencies of Science ;" by Prof. Barnard of Oxford, Miss., on "Improvements practicable in American Colleges ;" and by Mr. Hodgins, Deputy Superintendent of Schools in Upper Canada, on the "History and System of Popular Education in Upper Canada." We have also sketches of the lamented Abbott Lawrence, with a fine portrait, of the Lawrence Scientific School, of the History of Illinois College, and of the Richmond Female Institute. This number informs us, that since its preparation the partnership of its able editors, Rev. Absalom Peters, D.D., and Hon. Henry Barnard, LL.D., "has been dissolved by mutual agreement and for mutual convenience ;" and that they propose hereafter to publish separate periodicals, the one bearing the name of the "American Journal of Education," and the other of the "American Journal of Education and College Review." The field is broad enough for both ; and we most sincerely wish them both success. In the great work of education, we may say emphatically that "the field is the world ;" and we may add without impropriety :—"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers into his harvest."

The "Journal" of Dr. Barnard, who is assured of aid from a long list of eminent writers upon education, will be published by him at Hartford, every alternate month. The "Journal" of Dr. Peters, with whom Mr. Randall, the highly esteemed Superintendent of Schools in the City of New York, will hereafter be associated as Editor, will continue to be published monthly in New York, by N. A. Calkins. The agents in Boston are Robinson & Richardson, the publishers of that very popular and useful juvenile and school periodical, the STUDENT AND SCHOOLMATE, which has now attained a very wide circulation.

"This above all, to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."—*Shakspeare.*

EDUCATIONAL MEETINGS.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

To the general report of this meeting furnished by the Secretary for our last number, we now subjoin the Addresses made upon that occasion, so far as the Secretary has succeeded in obtaining them from their respective authors. The Lectures are, of course, reserved to be published in the "Transactions" of the Association.

SALUTATORY ADDRESSES.

In introducing the exercises of the first evening, the **PRESIDENT, MR STEARNS**, thus addressed the members of the Association:—

Permit me to congratulate you, fellow teachers, on the favorable auspices under which we are assembled. This commodious hall, these works of art, the open hospitality of this industrious city, the presence of these enlightened citizens, all attest that "the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places." We find our Association in the enjoyment of substantial prosperity. Organized in 1845, incorporated in 1846, some of you have personally felt, and others have witnessed, with what fostering care, with what assiduous attention, with what persevering struggle, it has been brought to its present position of power and usefulness.

It is most natural that teachers should suppose themselves best qualified to shape and direct the business of instruction; but it was a bold conception, to unite under one organization, and to bring into concert of action the entire educational corps of the State. Yet for such a measure there seemed an imperative demand. We had the courage to undertake it, and each year is adding to our prospect of its success.

For want of such concert before, every department of learning had languished. Defective elementary instruction crippled the student, and too often sent him limping up the hill of science, amid tears and difficulties, with ever-retarded progress. The college, on the other hand, could not descend to supply the defects of the school, and so the difficulty was perpetuated. It was not necessarily an idle assumption, that declared the master of a district school incompetent through ignorance, and therefore his office void, while the University was proud to give him rank at the top of his class. Much less could it have been so, had he belonged to that numerous body of collegians who seek their honors in a "Knavy Club," or fraternize with that respectable society, the "Porks."

I congratulate you that a more reasonable order of things is beginning to obtain. Our mutual dependence is not only seen; it is felt. The guardians of schools more generally appreciate the influence of the college; and demand that exactness of instruction which proceeds from minds disciplined by continued grapple with severe studies in the higher institutions. On the other hand, Presidents and Professors seek a more suitable foundation for the superstructure they are to erect. They realize that no power of theirs can cause pure rivers of knowledge to flow from turbid rills and muddy fountains. Accordingly, they have joined hands with us; and henceforth we labor, not only in a common cause, but with unity of purpose and concert of action.

Every order of educationists, from the distinguished head of our University, to the humblest teacher of an infant school, is now represented on our

books. We have, moreover, a printed organ of established character and extensive circulation. By means of this, our voice is heard, not only in Massachusetts, but throughout the Union. Public sympathy, also, and State patronage are ready to our aid. Indeed, we have all the appliances for a successful campaign against the vices and the ignorance of the age.

The weapons of aggression are in our hands. Our cause is noble. Humanity summons. Our hearts are brave. Let us rouse ourselves to the work, and go forth boldly, "conquering and to conquer." And may the Great Teacher enlighten us; and the Good Spirit strengthen us; and the blessed ministers that guard the children, a cloud of witnesses, bear to the skies a good report of "Well done," when they behold the face of Him to whom we look for reward, Our Father in Heaven.

JOSEPH WHITE, ESQ., of Lowell, then spoke substantially as follows:—

MR. PRESIDENT,

It has been suggested that it might not be inappropriate to say a few words at this time, expressive of the feelings of our citizens with reference to the meeting of your Association in this place. And, Sir, in behalf of the people and teachers of Lowell, I bid you a hearty welcome. Nay, more,—for the word is not strong enough,—we *thank* you for coming. We thank you for selecting, as the place of your deliberations, this city of practical art, where (though we have not that object especially in view,) we are working out the problem of the importance, nay, the necessity of intelligence,—just that intelligence which you are communicating to the Massachusetts mind,—to all successful industry; where we are daily proving that the word "skill," so often upon our tongues, has its basis in intelligence; and thus confirming the maxim of Bacon, which some would deny, that "Knowledge is Power."

Sir, we regard the true teacher as a public benefactor. If it be true that the man who plants a tree, or builds a house, or makes two blades of grass grow where but one grew before, is a benefactor,—surely, most surely, must he be accounted one, who, as another has expressed it, "plucks up the jewel of the mind from the dust, and polishes it for this world and the next." And we esteem it a happy phase of the educational system of Massachusetts, one which augurs well for her future progress, that her teachers associate themselves for mutual improvement and encouragement in their work, as you are now associated. Certainly, if yours be the high vocation which we claim it to be, why should not those who are engaged in it unite in their counsels and sympathies, and "join hearts and hands in their work?" If the men of mighty squashes and enormous pumpkins, they who boast of fast nags and huge Durhams, assemble in every county and State in the nation to consult together with reference to the pursuits in which they are engaged, to eat good dinners,—not always dry ones,—and to hear themselves called by eloquent lips *the benefactors* of the country,—why should not the men and women, who lay their hand upon the plastic minds of our children, and train them for immortality, also meet in council, and have their *Symposia*,—without the Falernian,—and feel their blood rush quicker, and their hearts grow warmer in their work; in the culture, not of broad lands, but of imperishable intellect; in the production, not of corn or cattle, not of machinery or cloth, but of that knowledge which strengthens and those virtues which adorn the State?

Sir, we welcome you here. We have done what we could to make your stay agreeable. We wish you to feel, that, although our ears are filled for the most part with the clang of the anvil and the clatter of the shuttle, yet we have a place close beside our hearts for those who take our children by the hand and lead them up the steep of science. We would have you feel that we appreciate the educational system which has elevated Massachusetts

above all the world beside. This Hall, erected by the munificence of the sagacious men who founded this city, and whose silent faces speak to us from these walls, [referring to the portraits of John A. Lowell, Nathan Appleton, Patrick T. Jackson, Kirk Boott, and Abbott Lawrence,]—alas that so many of them are no longer numbered with the living!—is their emphatic testimony to the value of science and a liberal culture, as the only sure foundations of success in their bold experiment.

These schools, planted by the labors of a Colburn and his compeers, and presided over by a numerous body of teachers, whom we cherish and love, and with whom you are already acquainted, testify that we are not unmindful of the principles and policy of the fathers of the city.

And, Sir, could your stay be prolonged to the Sabbath,—that day which the quaint but sweet Herbert describes as

“The fruit of this, the next world’s bud,”—

and visit our numerous churches, and behold from five to seven thousand of our population, youthful and adult, engaged in the exercises of the Sabbath school, you would find that, while we prize and cherish the means of human learning, we also would not forget that there is a nobler science, that there are purer fountains, whose waters minister to the higher life of the immortal spirit.

But, Sir, I have detained you too long. I close, as I began, with a welcome, and with the hope that your deliberations may be pleasant and harmonious; that you may return with fresh vigor to your labors; and that you may leave behind you an influence which shall elevate the standard and advance the interests of education among us.

To this Address the PRESIDENT thus replied:—

MR. WHITE,

Most cordially do I respond to your generous welcome. In the name of the teachers of Massachusetts, I heartily thank you for your noble hospitality. To those of us who have been accustomed to the onerous duty of providing for these meetings, and who have sometimes encountered the chill of indifference, your ready, your whole-souled invitation, so warm from hospitable hearts, fell like refreshing rain upon our languishing spirits.

In expressing the gratitude which we feel to you, Sir, and to the citizens of Lowell generally, we would especially notice the good offices of Mr. C. C. Chase, and others of your corps of public teachers. The people of Lowell should congratulate themselves on having, in their employ, men of such decided ability. To us they have rendered most efficient service. They are men of mark among us. We “esteem them very highly for their work’s sake;” and we tender to them our profoundest thanks.

Your good city, Sir, has always been a place of interest for its rapid growth, and for the peculiar employment of its people. Why, Sir, men still live, within whose memory these beautiful streams rolled lazily and unobstructed to the ocean. But a single farm-house, or so, with its flocks and herds, represented all of life, and hum, and industry, that marked the spot where now stand your packed edifices, with their thronged streets, and noisy mills, and clanging workshops.

Many of us here present can remember when your town had not even a name; when swains and lasses, in all this rural neighborhood, sought, in their drives, to visit the “Corporation,”—as the incipient city was called,—that they might gaze upon what seemed to them the incredible achievements of its founders, with mingled wonder and delight. A large city, devoted principally to mechanical and manufacturing pursuits, was then unknown in all this region. Even the village of Lowell was, perhaps, more than rivalled in this respect by the village of Waltham, which remains a village still.

Some of us can recall the time when your railroad excavations, the first on this continent, were the wonder of the curious, and the admiration of the wise. With what eagerness did a party of boys undertake a pilgrimage of ten miles, on foot, and accompanied by their teacher, to witness this marvel of your enterprise. Such works are common now, and attract no especial notice. Yet Lowell is still true to her position, and foremost in all achievements of practical science.

But, Sir, we have not come here out of idle curiosity, or to admire the evidences of your enterprise or prosperity. We could scarcely have been tempted from our homes at this inclement season for such a purpose. Not the parade you once exhibited, of *seven thousand damsels, robed in white*, and marching to music through your streets; or the more daring spectacle, presented on the same occasion, of a Yankee Factory Girl publicly proffering a well received and heartily returned kiss to the President of the United States, would have induced us to make this visit. We have come for graver objects. We have at heart the great interests of Popular Education. We have come to devise measures for its better and more rapid advancement.

We were assured of a cordial welcome, and we have found it. What else should professed teachers meet with at the home of Warren Colburn, that great master of arithmetical science, and prince of mathematicians?

In educational matters, Sir, your city has proved herself worthy of her glorious son. She has ever manifested a wise policy towards the cause which we represent. Only thirteen out of the three hundred and twenty-eight towns in our State, and in her county only five, pay as much for the education of each particular child belonging to them as she. Perhaps no town in the State could better afford such an outlay. Certainly, none is more likely to reap the advantages of education. It is a well-understood maxim, that cultivation of mind reduces the necessity for physical labor. A man may wheel a barrow, or drive a hand-cart, even, to better advantage, with intellectual training. The return of your money invested in schools is everywhere visible in the superior skill of your mechanics, and the constantly improving machinery of your industrial establishments.

Those operatives who come to your mills from the hamlets and farms of New England, already possessing considerable cultivation, and entering your service merely to obtain the means of carrying themselves forward in educational attainments, or of lifting a mortgage from a beloved homestead and a heavy burden from a more beloved parent's heart, or more joyously of providing a respectable outfit wherewith to enter upon matrimonial life, are acknowledged by all to render far the more valuable service,—some of them even performing acceptably the labor of three or four ordinary persons. And though this general cultivation may create in your establishments a scarcity of Yankee girls, it is only because their superior intelligence permits them to labor elsewhere with greater profit. At the same time, I have the testimony of one of your own agents, that "the children of our foreign population, when properly educated in the schools, are capable of rendering service scarcely inferior to that bestowed by those whose parents are native born."

European manufacturers are compelled to admit that our Schools of Design, our scientific, and our common schools, have already rendered us dangerous rivals. And some of them have not hesitated to express their foreboding fears that, unless some measures can be devised to provide themselves with better educated operatives, not even their greater cheapness of labor can sustain them in successful competition with American industry and skill.

But, Sir, I need not enlarge upon these topics to the intelligent mechanics of Lowell. They have shown their high appreciation of learning, and their interest in our cause, by the very generous manner in which they have tendered to us the free use of their library and reading-room, and of this beautiful hall.

For all their kindness, and for the cheerfulness with which it is bestowed, in the name of the teachers of Massachusetts, I most heartily thank them.

I am unwilling any longer, Sir, to detain you and this audience from the intellectual treat which awaits them. For I have yet to introduce to you one whom the people delight to honor, and who undertakes nothing which he does not do well.

Permit me, in closing, to repeat the assurance that your heartiness in our cause, your courtesy, and your generosity, have deeply affected us.

When we return to our homes, we will say,—and the world shall hear of it,—that we have been to Lowell, and, while we looked in vain for your historic men, or saw them only as shadows on the wall, we still found there a race wise in head and warm in heart, who received us with an open-handed nobleness, worthy of the great, and good, and honored, who have gone to their reward.

THE BEST METHODS OF TEACHING PENMANSHIP.

The discussion of this subject was opened by MR. KIMBALL, of Lowell, who read a judicious practical Essay, written by a teacher of that city, Mr. James M. McCoy. The chirography of this essay has uncommon beauty, and shows its writer to be fully master of his art. We insert a few extracts.

“Writing is an art both *mechanical* and *mental*. To become an expert penman requires the careful training of the muscles that control the pen, and the development of certain faculties of the mind that operate upon the muscles. The intimate relation existing between them is beyond our ability to fathom. How the will sends forth its mandates, and obedience follows with the rapidity of lightning in the varied movements of complex writing, is a mystery; but we are assured that mind and muscle blend together in the execution of writing, and just in proportion as they have been correctly developed in the practice of the art, such will be the character of the penmanship.”

“Teachers should give *personal attention* to each and all of their pupils, adjust their fingers, pen, and book, give them a practical illustration of the formation of letters, point out their most prominent faults, inspire them with a regard for neatness, praise whatever is commendable, stimulate them to good performances by appealing to their ambition, and arouse them to vigorous efforts by every variety of means that circumstances will favor.

“It is essential to success that the teacher have free and easy access to all his pupils during the exercise of writing; and that there be sufficient space between scholars in the extended attitude of writing, so that their arms and books may not interfere.”

“The *blackboard* for general instruction is an almost indispensable article of furniture for the school-room. The teacher should exhibit to the class the principles,—their formation and combination into letters,—require them to observe a similarity of slope and curve, and an equal distance of the letters, ask questions to be answered in concert, and contrast their own deformed execution with the symmetry and beauty of correct performance. Thus their judgment and taste will be improved, their faults will gradually diminish, and they will eventually attain freedom and elegance in penmanship.”

After the reading of the Essay, MR. WILLIAMS, Principal of the Winthrop School, Boston, said,—

That the subject under discussion was one in which he took a deep interest, and one worthy of far more attention from the teachers of Massachusetts and the whole country, than had of late years been given to it. In his

opinion, the principles of correct instruction in this department are not so well established as they should be. There are many theories and many systems of instruction that have found favor, which are false and pernicious in their results. They may all be comprehended under two heads, the old and the modern styles of penmanship. He thought the old fashioned round hand in its perfection, by far the best style which can be acquired. It is not inconsistent with great freedom of movement, and is far more legible than the modern styles in which the angular principle is made prominent. The angular, open style had been much advocated of late years on the ground of its rapidity, but, in his opinion, its faults outweigh its excellences.

In Boston, the subject had been somewhat agitated, but there was no settled practice among the teachers. Three years ago the attention of the School Board was called to it, and the masters of all the schools were requested to meet and see whether some uniform system might not be adopted. After some discussion the subject was referred to a Committee of five, of which he, Mr. Williams, was Chairman; and, after examining a dozen or more systems, the Committee were unwilling to lend their sanction to any one of them so far as to recommend its adoption. They therefore were unanimous in their Report to the Board, recommending that each master be allowed to use the system which he preferred. The recommendation was adopted; the matter rested there, and still rests there to this day.

Mr. Williams then described his own methods of teaching. He preferred decidedly the round hand as the basis of his instruction, and, without calling it by name, he indicated the course of exercises and elements contained in Payson & Dunton's Revised Series of Writing-books. He dwelt upon the necessity of a rigid training upon these elements; he thought great patience and painstaking necessary to bring about correctness, legibility, and thoroughness of execution. Rapidity might be better left to take care of itself, than these essential qualities. He objected to the practice of encouraging rapid execution of the copies at the outset, when the style is unformed and yet to be acquired, because he believed the inevitable result, in a large majority of cases, must be a poor, careless, thin handwriting. He would have all the models for imitation of the simplest and severest style; free from all the modern turns which are meant to be ornamental and to secure freedom of movement, but which instil false ideas into the mind of the pupil, become under his management grotesque additions to the letters, and serve only to impair the legibility of the writing. The correctness which he aimed at, his experience satisfied him, was not gained at the expense of freedom. Freedom followed as a legitimate result of the thorough training which he had described.

Mr. Williams then described the arm and finger movements. He thought it essential to give exercise on these in connection with, and as complementary to, the training upon the letters and elementary principles.

He thought the old-fashioned penman of thirty years ago would be ashamed of what passes with some for fine penmanship now-a-days. Such a penman was his early teacher, Mr. Benjamin Holt, one after his own heart.

He could not say that the old training upon coarse hand, as hinted in the Essay just read, had a tendency to cramp the hand, because in that school where he thought writing was most successfully taught in Boston, this system was still rigidly carried out. He thought the best possible results would follow,—*exactness, legibility, and rapidity* of execution,—if the system of physical training proposed in Mr. McLaurin's Exercises be employed in connection with the essential elements of the old training.

MR. GREENLEAF of Bradford said that he was much pleased with the specimens of penmanship which had been exhibited to the audience. This system was a great improvement on those formerly taught.

To be able to write a good, fair, legible hand was very desirable, and it was an art which he never had attained. He had known teachers of chirography, who professed to write elegantly, but whose productions were as difficult to read as quail tracks!!! Pupils should be carefully taught to write their names *plainly*, even if they cannot write elegantly. He had often been troubled to ascertain the names of persons writing to him from a distance; and, in reply to their letters, he had been obliged to make a fac simile of the signature for a superscription.

Mr. SAWYER, of Malden, was of the opinion that the teacher, if he has correct ideas of the method of imparting instruction in penmanship, will in general be more successful in teaching that branch than a writing master. For, as the teacher's mind is continually in contact with that of the pupil, he has a much greater influence over him than the writing master can have, who merely gives instruction for half an hour, once or twice a week. He also thought that a regular time for this exercise should be assigned for all the pupils of the school, and that during this time no other studies should be pursued. Pupils should be trained to habits of neatness, in writing, in the care of their copy books, their pens, ink, &c.

Mr. KIMBALL, of Lowell, expressed the opinion that our teachers do not soon enough, or with sufficient persistence, apply the facility to use the pen which the pupil may have acquired, to exercises imitative of the actual pursuits of after life, and that hence many persons gain no practical conception of the utility of the art, until forced to it by the *demands* of after life. He proceeded to advance the sentiment, that punctuation, the proper employment of capitals, the just width of margins, suitable spaces between words, the proper filling up of lines, the correct division of syllables at the end of lines, &c., &c., with the location of dates, proper place for addresses, and other kindred matters, should supersede the invariable line so common on writing books, page after page, giving a foreigner the impression, by the column of capitals, that American boys write poetry as soon as they can hold a pen.

STUDYING OUT OF SCHOOL.

Upon this important subject, which was quite fully discussed, and upon which, as appears by the Secretary's Report in our last number, the sense of the Association was expressed by a nearly unanimous vote,—

Mr. GREENLEAF of Bradford said that, in his opinion, it should be enjoined on all pupils who had the command of their time out of school, to commit a short lesson, at least. He had formerly had some experience in teaching district schools, and he well recollected the pupils of a school which he taught in a country town in New Hampshire about fifty years ago,—that they uniformly spent their evenings in study, and that the improvement which they made was far superior to that of schools which he afterwards taught, where this practice was not enjoined; and he had never known an instance where his pupils' health was injured, provided they had sufficient exercise either in domestic employment or amusement. He did not believe that it was more injurious to a scholar's health or morals to spend his evenings in study, than it would be to walk or ride seven or eight miles, as he had known many to do, to attend a meeting for improving their *understanding*.

Prof. RUSSELL, of Lancaster, offered the following remarks:—

"The difficulty of answering this question arises from the different views on this subject on the part of parents; some of whom object to evening or morning study in addition to school lessons, and others are dissatisfied with the teacher if he does not prescribe long home lessons to fill up the

long winter evenings and summer mornings. The ground taken by the former is in many cases sound and just, as regards the health of their children. The teacher has under his care not a few pupils, perhaps, to whom very little close application ought ever to be prescribed, neither body nor mind being capable of much continuous exertion. Excitement, in some instances of this character, is followed by no lighter consequences of injudicious requisition than the penalties of habitual disease, or even of insanity and death. The complaint, on the other hand, that the teacher prescribes no home tasks, comes sometimes from inefficient domestic management, which cannot keep its subjects quiet without the dread of school penalties for misspent evenings, and needs the aid of the schoolmaster to keep order and quiet in the parlor.

No teacher can satisfy both parties in such cases; and he who tries the virtue of compromise, and requires a certain amount of time, or a certain extent of lesson, for evening tasks, hardly succeeds much better. No rule of universal application can be prescribed in this matter. The judicious and consentaneous management of both teachers and parents must be left to regulate particular cases. Yet it certainly is very undesirable to render any part of education a merely mechanical part of a daily routine of so many hours of time and nominal attention, which exerts no influence on the mental habits and tastes of the individual, and has no attraction in itself sufficiently strong to induce him to think, or inquire, or read for himself about it. Education so conducted can never become a living and a personal thing. No school lesson has any real value, which does not follow the pupil home, and everywhere, as a germinal seed implanted within him, growing up into inquiry and investigation and every practicable form of personal application.

One way in which this question may be met, without incurring the evils which have been mentioned, is this:—Let the teacher adopt the plan of admitting, at a time appropriated daily for it, a voluntary exercise of limited extent, connected with one or another of the regular school lessons of the day. Take Geography, for an example, and let the lesson supposed pertain to South America. Let the voluntary evening exercise be proposed in the form of a brief oral or written recapitulation, from a book contained in the school library, or otherwise accessible, of descriptions of scenery, plants, animals, or other interesting matter, as given by a traveller, in the region in question. If History is the school lesson, let the voluntary home study prepare the pupil to illustrate the subject of the lesson by a written or oral biographical sketch. Grammar and Arithmetic are not proper subjects for such exercises. They require too intense and close application for extra work. Yet no lesson in grammar will ever prove so effectual as the oral or written recapitulation suggested above. From one of our eminent writers, when a schoolboy, his teacher once received, as a voluntary exercise, a ballad on Indian life, of more than a hundred lines, of excellent versification. The "voluntary principle" will oftener need checking than stimulating.

MR. STONE, Principal of the Millbury High School, thought the debate thus far, like the statement of the topic for discussion, very indefinite. He would therefore offer the following Resolution:—*Resolved*, That as practical teachers, we see no impropriety in assigning lessons which will require more or less preparation out of school hours.

Mr. Stone said that he could see no valid objection to the preparation of lessons, in part at least, out of school hours. He did not think the health of pupils injured by the practice, if they were judiciously managed in other respects. If study was to be restricted to the school-room, very much must be deducted from the amount accomplished during the limited period in which the young are members of school.

The substance of the argument presented by Mr. KIMBALL, of Lowell, upon this question, was as follows:—

1. Children have a right to a good physical development. Confinement is irksome to them. They must learn to walk, run, ride, climb, swim, skate, coast, shout in the open air, unhampered by rules, unawed by authority. They can never possess "the sound mind in the sound body" without this. Hence confinement beyond common school hours is an injury.

2. Children should not be *pushed* mentally faster than the growth of body indicates a corresponding growth of mind. Years will give strength and power to the mind, even if education in the lore of books lend not its aid. Acting on this principle, it is injudicious to anticipate, at fourteen, the proper mental requirements of eighteen. Some pupils, too many, can be incited thus to attempt to be beforehand with Nature, but she punishes them in her own good time.

3. All attendants upon schools have a right to a considerable share of time, setting aside exercise, for other purposes. Boys may and should learn a great deal not bound in calf nor blinding in black letter. Teachers should never discourage themselves with the idea, that all the boys who do not get ten hours' study, lose a sad portion of their time. Many things are better learned without, than within, the school-room. Some cannot be taught there at all. Boys have a right to develop their natural traits at other benches than the school bench. They should read history, travels, fiction, &c. They should visit companions, attend lectures, trade, plan, earn and spend money. Girls should know how to perform the duties of after years, in general or particular house management, attending upon the unfortunate, and practising the sublime exercise of waiting upon themselves. All these accomplishments, and many more, must *engross time out of school*.

4. Teachers are unwise to create by unhealthy stimulants a desire for advancement which they cannot meet. The difficulty of to-day is, too many studies, too little knowledge. In maturer life a thoughtful man thinks more highly of excellence in elementary instruction than of "ologies," and esteems as the best teacher not him who taught *most*, but *best*. We may have this meed in coming years without breaking the health of our pupils, or rushing ourselves upon premature decay.

Mr. STONE thought the remarks of the gentleman from Lowell were calculated to make out an extreme case. "It is unreasonable," he proceeded, "to attribute all shattered constitutions and unstrung nervous systems to *excessive study*. It may, perhaps, in many cases, gratify parental pride to do so. To many people, student life suggests nothing but a pale-faced person, with a sheep skin, a pair of spectacles, and the dyspepsia. Children who are indulged in late hours, high-seasoned food, and amusements unnaturally exciting, are injured more by such injudicious management than by study out of school. Teachers are often in fault for neglecting the physical cultivation of their pupils. In allowing them to lounge away a recess, instead of taking active, cheerful exercise, they do them a greater injury than by requiring a little study during an evening hour.

"The time occupied in actual study in the school-room, after deducting for recitations and recesses, does not exceed three or three and a half hours per day,—a portion quite too short for the requirements of the school. The gentleman from Lowell considers recitations a kind of study. They require mental effort, it is true, but they are a change from study, and, by a well-known principle in education, are a source of relief and recreation. The sense of fatigue, which the mind experiences from study, is not always to be measured by the length of time during which it is occupied. An unhealthy stimulus during a few hours in the school-room is more exhausting than more protracted application under agreeable influences. Pupils who feel, in the school-room, the want of time for study, labor under a kind of pressure that is very far from being encouraging or advantageous. The partial preparation of lessons out of school will remove so depressing an influence."

MR. HAMMOND of Groton said :—

He was not in favor of limiting mental application to "school hours" only. The pupils of every grade of schools could spend some part of each winter evening, and some of the hours of a long summer day, very profitably on lessons assigned to be studied *out* of school as well as *in*. The country schools generally had two sessions a day of three hours each, and in the city it was quite fashionable to have but one daily session of four or five hours. If health or any other reason in the nature of the case,—that is, the case of young persons,—required all the pupils of one grade of schools in any town or city to study only during certain hours of each day, then why should not the same rule apply to every grade of schools and to every kind of mental labor?

"But young persons and the old also differ in no one thing more than in rapidity of mental action. Some appear to think with ease; to others thought is a real labor, and to some the severest labor. The value of thought is not in proportion to the time employed in mental exercises. The results of study are of great value often to that pupil who is slow to acquire knowledge. He labors slow, but sure, and he must take time. To confine some minds within arbitrary or any assigned limits of time will disable them altogether. The college student is allowed a private room and the disposition of his own time in getting a lesson. All that is required of him is that he be ready to recite at an appointed hour. Why should a more stringent system of study be applied to schools of any lower grade? Why will not the retirement of home aid the boy who has a hard lesson in arithmetic, as well as the college student who can be prepared for his recitation in algebra only by close and continued application?

"But it is said this is a sanitary measure; and it is assumed that the great majority of pupils are tempted to excessive study, so that hours are devoted by them to mental labor, which ought to be spent in exercise or amusements. Now for one, I am not apprehensive of any general evils arising from excessive studies or too hard tasks. In my opinion, the health of students is endangered far more from the consequences of neglecting study, than from too great attention to their school exercises. I think that this is true of so great a majority, that the exceptions ought not to be regarded when we inquire what is best for the welfare of students taken as a class. I think that this is true of those seminaries where the highest incentives to intellectual labor are constantly operative. If, then, indolence is the bane of all schools, even in respect to the physical health, it is folly indeed for us to favor a so-called measure of reform, for the relief of drones, when their greatest want is an efficient stimulant to a more healthy condition of the intellect as a means of promoting bodily health.

"But are there not great numbers of sickly students? We reply that a great many young people must be sick, for half the human race die before twenty years of age,—an allotment of humanity which falls with far greater severity on the unenlightened and ignorant, than upon the educated classes and nations of mankind. But students are not more likely to be sick than young persons of the same age not attending school. This can be made to appear by the clearest evidence.

"We all know of one kind of sickness which is called 'college fever;' but which is found in schools of every lower grade. A hard task assigned, is the cause of the complaint; and absence and loss of standing, the fatal results. Such a complaint cannot be cured except by such a measure as the one proposed, and even that will fail to cure the worst cases. If a pupil is really sick, or is in any danger of becoming so, the last place for him is the school-room. Let the physician be called at once, and the teacher relieved of the duty of nursing a sick child.

"Undoubtedly it is the teacher's duty to look after the health of his pupils,

and to give information at once to parents, if pupils need to be restrained from over-action of the mind. The consequences of evil which flow from any such instances of over-action (and they are few comparatively,) are greatly to be regretted; and to be regretted for this special reason, that those very persons (whether pupils or parents,) who are the most alarmed, have the least occasion to take warning. It is certain they will never suffer any thing but fear from the consequences of hard study. Those, on the other hand, who are really in danger, seem generally blind to its approach, till it is too late to avoid it."

SUPERVISION OF SCHOOLS.

The meeting at Lowell was a model for attention to business and the earnest discussion of important questions, bearing directly upon the practical work of education. No time was lost, or worse than lost, in trifling dispute, personal altercation, questions of order, or strife about the constitution. Among the leading topics of the meeting, was the great subject of School Supervision. This had been introduced the year before, at Northampton, and referred to a Committee. This Committee now brought in an able Report, with a summary of their views in four propositions, which were individually considered and adopted by the Association. A prize was also awarded to an excellent Essay upon the subject. For this and the four propositions, we refer our readers to the "Teacher" for January. But we are not willing to close our account of the meeting, without making some extracts from the valuable report of the Committee.

"The supervision of schools, and the entire administration of our school laws, are now vested in School Committees. These Committees are elected annually, and are clothed with ample authority for the attainment of the important ends which they have in view. There is, perhaps, in no department of civil or municipal service a nearer approach to unlimited and irresponsible power, than is found in the case of School Committees. The powers which have been thus lavishly, and yet wisely bestowed upon them, have been, for the most part, judiciously exercised. The restraints of public sentiment, together with a sense of the sacredness of the high trusts committed to their care, have, with rare exceptions, been found sufficient checks upon the exercise of powers which, at first, might seem too great for ordinary degrees of human virtue. Corruption in its various forms has been found quite as seldom, we think, in School Committees as in any department of the public service.

"It is not, therefore, for a purer administration of the school laws for which we are seeking. The sums of money entrusted to the School Committees of the cities and towns of this Commonwealth are unquestionably expended with more scrupulous and conscientious honesty, than any others which are drawn by taxation from the purses of the people. We take great pleasure, and some degree of pride, in making these statements. They indicate that, in all the strife and corruption to which sect and party have given birth, there is yet one department of the public service which the representatives of all parties have felt to be too sacred to be profaned. And woe be to the man, accursed be the party, which shall first venture to plough upon this our Cirrhæan plain, which the laws of our ancestors and the customs of their children have invested with more than Delphian sanctity, and made the object of scarcely less than a truly devout and religious veneration."

"We have spoken of the deficiencies of Committees as resulting mainly from want of experience. To secure a larger share of experience in these boards, it appears to your Committee exceedingly desirable that their term of office should be lengthened, and that the changes in these boards should be

gradual;—that they should be elected for a term of years, and that, in any one year, but a portion of the Committee should retire from office. Such a plan has already been adopted in the city of Boston, and your Committee venture to express the hope that the time may not be far distant when it shall prevail throughout the State."

"It is not enough to constitute an efficient school supervisor, that, while acquiring his education, he taught three or four district schools, and learned just enough of the profession to have a contempt for it all the rest of his life, and to pity the stupidity of those who, as he thinks, have not force or fire enough to rise to some higher occupation. This, we are aware, is often called *experience in school-keeping*. It bears about the same relation to that kind of experience which we need in school supervisors, that the practice of a pettifogging lawyer, in a police court, does to the practice of a Webster or a Mason,—that the experience of a country justice, who has presided over a few trials in cases of assault and battery, does to the experience of a Marshall or a Story."

"Lawyers are admitted to the bar after an examination before the Court, physicians are allowed to practise after an examination before a competent medical faculty, and clergymen are ordained by an ecclesiastical council. In like manner should teachers be examined and approved for their work by those who have had the longest experience and the highest success in the profession to which they propose to devote themselves.

"It would seem, however, quite important that such examinations should have reference to two distinct points;—1st, the literary and scientific qualifications of the candidate; and 2d, his ability to impart instruction and govern a school. A certificate of qualification, so far as mere attainments are concerned, should be given at any time after passing a satisfactory examination in the branches which the candidate proposes to teach. After a period of successful teaching, it would seem desirable that another certificate should be granted, if the success of the individual should justify it, and that these certificates should be regarded as a passport to full professional standing.

"It would seem that a course like this would do much to guard our schools from abuses to which they must be constantly exposed under the present loose and irresponsible system. But, while much may be done to secure a higher standard of professional attainment, it should be borne in mind that our own profession, like all others, will always be infested with *quacks*. Absolute perfection it would be too much to expect, but the evils which at present exist should stimulate us to unwearied effort to remove them.

INTELLIGENCE AND MISCELLANY.

MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF EDUCATION.—This Board consists of eight members appointed by the Governor and Council, and of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor *ex officio*. To secure regularity and stability of educational progress, and to remove the Board from the region of political and sectarian warfare, the members by appointment are chosen for eight years, one only being changed in regular course each year. During the last year, however, through a singular concurrence of events, there have been three appointments. Though made by a "Know Nothing" Governor and Council, all must concede that the selections have been made with great *wisdom*, and with impartiality in respect to sect and party. It has been very gratifying to the teachers of the State, that two eminent members of their own profession have been chosen:—Ariel Parish, Esq., Principal of the Springfield High School, in place of the Rev. Emerson Davis, D. D., of Westfield, whose term of office had expired; and Professor Cor-

nelius C. Felton, of the University at Cambridge, in place of George B. Emerson, Esq., who resigned in anticipation of his visit to Europe. More recently, the Rev. Alonzo H. Quint, of West Roxbury, a young man, but one whose reputation is far in advance of his years, has been appointed in place of the Hon. George S. Boutwell, elected Secretary of the Board.

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION.—It has been decided to hold the next annual meeting in Springfield, Mass., in the month of August next. From the beauty of the spot, the intelligence and cultivation of its citizens, and its convenience of access, the selection must be regarded as a very happy one. Preparations are already making to secure for the meeting a high degree of intellectual interest. We are happy to state that a new volume of the Transactions of the Institute is in the press of Messrs. Ticknor & Fields.

“How empty learning, and how vain is art,
But as it mends the life, and guides the heart!”—*Young*.

TOWN ASSOCIATIONS.—In some parts of the State great interest is felt in the subject of town associations for the advancement of education. The last number of the “Teacher” reported the decided and earnest action of the Barnstable County Association upon this subject. A letter received from that County soon after the meeting of the Association shows that their zeal did not content itself with mere votes and resolves:—“We are forming a Town Association in ———. We have held a preliminary meeting, and shall hold our second meeting to-morrow night. I trust a good work is begun here. I have talked with the friends of education in two or three towns, and they are desirous of doing something. The Directors of the County Association will meet this afternoon to adopt measures to bring the subject before the people in every town.”

The teachers in Barre have been holding weekly meetings this winter for the discussion of subjects connected with the business of teaching. Wednesday, January 9th, was devoted to a town convention upon education, which was fully attended notwithstanding the cold and snow drifts, and with deep interest.

In Ashby the people have connected, this winter, with their Lyceum lectures, various exercises for their own more direct improvement, such as singing, declamation by the boys and young men, the reading by young ladies of a weekly paper of contributed articles in prose and poetry, discussion, and an exercise in which any one may propose to any other one present any question in science, literature, or history, with the obligation upon the latter of investigating it, and answering it according to the best of his ability at the next meeting. These exercises have been found to be alike interesting and profitable. With them the Lyceum is no longer to the attendants a place for mere passive listening, or chatting with one's neighbors, but a scene of varied, sharp, and original action of the intellect, where as “iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.”

We are always glad to see, in our papers, such notices as the following, which we copy from a late number of the Taunton Whig:—“The Teachers' Association of this town will meet at the High School Room, on Saturday, the 5th inst., at 2½ o'clock, P. M. The Association will be addressed by Mr. Ruggles, Principal of the High School, after which there will be a discussion. Teachers and all others interested, are invited to attend.”

ILLUSTRATIONS OF RULES IN ARITHMETIC.—*Addition.*—“Did you ever know so mean a man? Why, he does not even amount to a sum in Addition. For reckon him all up, from bottom to top, or top to bottom, (it

makes no difference where you begin,) and there is nothing to set down, and nothing to carry."

Subtraction.—"I happened in a school-room one day, while a class of very small boys and girls were reciting a lesson in Arithmetic. It was about their first lesson.

"'Five from five leaves how many?' asked the teacher, of a little girl of some 'six years old.' After a moment's reflection, she answered:

"'Five.'

"'How do you make that out?' said the teacher.

"Holding her little hands out toward him, she said:

"'Here are five fingers on my right hand, and here are five on the other. Now, if I take the five fingers on my left hand away from the five on my right hand, won't five remain?'

"The teacher was, as we say in this region, 'stumped,' and was obliged to 'surrender at discretion.'"—*Knickerbocker*.

Interest.—Richard Brinsley Sheridan, who was distinguished alike for eloquence, wit, and thriftlessness, once replied to a tailor, who asked him for at least the interest on his bill, "It is not my *interest* to pay the *principal*, nor my *principle* to pay the *interest*."

A man who had made a fortune by industry and close economy, in a retail business, at length retired from trade, and used to loan his money on interest. One day, in midsummer, a friend happened to say to him: "How pleasant it is to have such long, bright days!" "Why, ye-e-s," replied he, "but these long days the interest comes in *so* slow!"

APPOINTMENTS.—Mr. Henry Chase, of Claremont, N. H., a graduate of Dartmouth College in the year 1850, and for some time an assistant librarian in the Smithsonian Institute, (associated here with Prof. Jewett, and leaving with him,) has recently been appointed Principal of the High School in Concord. We are happy to welcome him to the corps of Massachusetts teachers.

The School Committee of Dorchester, on the 9th ult., unanimously elected Mr. Lemuel C. Grosvenor, of South Hingham, Principal of the Mather Grammar School, and Mr. P. B. Merritt, of Hingham, Principal of the New Washington School.

A DILEMMA OF THREE HORNS.—The good people of Salem have had, as in Boston, three High Schools,—a Latin and an English High School for boys, and a High School for girls. Thinking this dispersion of strength, money, and interest, to be injudicious, they have resolved to incorporate them into one, and have been erecting a spacious building for their reception. But they have had three excellent teachers as Principals of their three schools. Which of the three shall they select to preside over the new school? In appointing any one, how can they satisfy the friends of the other two? In this dilemma, or more etymologically *trilemma*, to extricate themselves from difficulty and avoid all suspicion of favoritism, they have resorted to the expedient often adopted by political conventions. They "have dropped the three candidates," and have invited that excellent teacher, Mr. Jacob Batchelder, Principal of the Lynn High School, to occupy the new position. If it was necessary in their election to look beyond Salem, we know not where they could have made a better choice. And if other towns are desirous of procuring for similar situations teachers of long experience, large attainment, and well-proved reputation, we know not where they should now look sooner than to Salem.

Mr. Batchelder is expected to enter upon the duties of his new office early in the spring.

"The most original spelling we have ever seen is the following. It transcends phonetics: 80 you be—a tub. 80 oh! pea—a top. Be 80—bat.—See 80—cat. Pea 80—pat. Are 80—rat. See a bee—cab. Be you double tea—butt. Be a double ell—ball."

DIRECTORS AND LOCAL COMMITTEE.—The Directors of the Massachusetts Teachers' Association held two meetings in December, on the 15th and the 22d, for the appointment of Editors of the "Teacher," and to make provision for its publication in accordance with the wishes of the Association, as expressed at their annual meeting. The Local and Financial Committee, Mr. Smith of Cambridge, upon whose resignation Mr. Capen of Boston was substituted, Mr. Kneeland of Roxbury, and Messrs. Allen and Gage of Boston,—have met frequently, and deserve many thanks from the Association for much zeal manifested and labor performed in its behalf, and (what ought always to be synonymous) for the cause of education.

THE "TEACHER."—A correspondent writes:—"I am very glad an effort is making to improve the "Teacher." If the right course is taken, I do not see why it cannot be made an integral and indispensable part of our system, so useful and valuable that every teacher will take it who does not wish to be behind the times. This can be done if teachers will only be willing to use it as a medium for the exchange of views and opinions, and the free communication of information. Every other profession has such a medium. Why should not we?"

THE Principal of an Institution in New Jersey writes:—"I hail with pleasure the improvements that have been made in your valuable Journal, and sincerely hope that all friends of popular instruction will give it that support which it so justly merits."

A friend from Cincinnati writes that they hope to make up for us there a subscription list of at least twenty. Shall we not be stimulated and encouraged to work at home by this voice from the West? Let us keep in mind the old fable of the teamster who invoked the aid of Hercules.

RESPONSE FROM HORACE MANN.—We have been cheered by the following, with his subscription, from this eminent leader in educational progress:—"ANTIOCH COLLEGE, Yellow Springs, O., January 19th, 1856.—I thank the person, whoever he is, who sent me the above Prospectus. I am still with the Common School Teachers in heart and soul. My confidence in their usefulness is not shaken; my wishes for their welfare are undiminished. Success to the great cause; success to those who sustain it, is the earnest wish of
HORACE MANN."

HASTE NOT—REST NOT.

TRANSLATED FROM GOETHE.

WITHOUT haste! without rest!
Bind the motto to thy breast!
Bear it with thee as a spell;
Storm or sunshine, guard it well!
Heed not flowers that round thee bloom,
Bear it onward to the tomb!

Haste not! let no thoughtless deed
Mar fore'er the spirit's speed;
Ponder well and know the right;
Onward, then, with all thy might.
Haste not—years can ne'er atone
For one reckless action done!

Rest not ! life is sweeping by ;
Do and DARE before you die.
Something mighty and sublime
Leave behind to conquer time.
Glorious 't is to live for aye
When these forms have passed away !

Haste not ! rest not ! calmy wait,
Meekly bear the storms of fate.
Duty be thy polar guide—
Do the *right*, whate'er betide !
Haste not—rest not— conflicts past,
God shall crown thy work at last.



EDITORIAL POSTSCRIPT.

OUR readers will find much interesting and valuable matter, in part eminently practical, in the full and authentic reports of addresses and remarks made at the late Annual Meeting at Lowell, which we are enabled to present in this number. A sketch of the remarks of one gentleman, unfortunately, reached us too late for insertion this month. Since types are not air (though they often convey much that is airy.) but solid metal, and so refuse to be compressed, these reports must, of course, limit the space which we can appropriate to other departments. But we adopt the motto expressed above in the beautiful and inspiring lines from Goethe ; and we hope that our readers will do the same.

It will be seen that several of our articles have express reference to the annual town and district meetings, which are now so near at hand. These it seemed indispensable to insert in the present number. Else they would fall behind their proper season ; and the sage Portia's punning precept has especial application to periodicals :—

"How many things by *season season'd* are
To their right praise and true perfection !"

Will not our friends take especial pains, by lending their copies of the "Teacher" and in other ways, to bring these articles to the notice of those to whom they are more particularly addressed ? The editors of newspapers, who are commonly warm friends of education, would in most cases, if their attention were drawn to the subject, cheerfully render their aid, and very valuable aid, either by copying from the "Teacher," or, still better, by writing original articles.

An important suggestion in respect to the circulation of the "Teacher" will be found on page 61.

PRIZE ESSAYS.—The prizes offered by the Massachusetts Teachers' Association are evidently producing an excellent effect in leading to thought and its expression with the pen. In 1853, six essays only were presented as competitors for the prizes ; in 1854, this number was doubled ; in 1855, it was increased to fifteen. Of the last, the thirteen to which prizes could not be awarded are in the hands of Mr. Coolidge, our publisher, and will be

returned to their authors on application. In examining them, we have been highly gratified to find in them so much excellent thought and right sentiment so happily expressed; and have written on the envelopes of more than half of them, a request that we may be allowed to extract some of their fine passages for our pages. As Mr. Coolidge preserves the seals unbroken, we have no other means of reaching their owners. And we now give fair warning, that if the writers leave them much longer unreclaimed, we shall begin to enrich our pages with their spoils. Call such essays *unsuccessful*! It is a gross perversion of language, unless pecuniary gain constitutes the great success of composition. In the best kind of wealth, their authors have all been enriched by the writing. Of the two successful essays, it would be superfluous for us to say a word in commendation, since the decision of the Committee, and with the opportunity which our readers have of judging of them for themselves.

OUR QUESTION BOX.—We have received answers to two of the questions proposed in our last number, for which we are truly obliged to our prompt correspondent. We should insert them this month, were not a little more time required for the engraving of the diagrams by which they are illustrated. The delay will, we hope, have this compensation, that meanwhile we shall receive other answers. We have received two additional questions, but too late for the present number. They will appear in our next.

To "J. K. L."—Mr. Coolidge has a letter from Indiana addressed to J. K. L., the author of "A Prayer for Light," in the last April number of the "Teacher." We fancy that we can guess the significance of these initials, but, to avoid the possibility of mistake, would prefer that the author should send for the letter.

TEACHERS' EXCHANGE.—Our Local and Financial Committee, at their last meeting, voted to meet informally on Saturday of each week, at 3 o'clock, P. M., at the bookstore of Messrs. Ide & Dutton, No. 106 Washington Street, Boston. The members of the Board of Editors, and all other Teachers, both gentlemen and ladies, are invited to "drop in" at the same time and place, for the mutual shaking of hands and exchanging of sympathies after the labors of the week, for agreeable conversation, and for conference respecting the "Teacher" and other means of advancing the great cause in which they are engaged. Merchants meet daily for the interchange of stocks and goods. Clergymen meet Monday morning, in this bookstore or that according to their denominational attachments, to consult together and arrange their exchanges. And have teachers nothing to exchange with each other; no intellectual commodities which they can reciprocally give and receive? Are there no benefits which they can derive from friendly conference? Have they no joys to double, no sorrows to divide, by sharing them with each other; no trials and difficulties to be lightened, no doubts to be solved, no high and noble plans to be furthered, through mutual aid? Let us then all say, but not in the spirit with which it was uttered of old, "Come, let us look one another in the face."

TO SCHOOL COMMITTEES.—School Committees will confer a great favor upon us, and will also, we believe, further the good cause in which they are engaged with us, by sending us copies of their Annual Reports and other school documents, as soon as published. These publications often contain facts, opinions, and arguments, which it is desirable at once to spread, through an educational Journal, beyond the immediate locality for which they were expressly written.